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# THE BOOKMAN

JOHN FARRAR, *Editor* GRANT OVERTON, *Associate Editor*

## THE POINT OF VIEW

### A BIRTHRIGHT FORESWORN

THE normal approach to the Metropolitan Museum is by the Fifth Avenue omnibus line which carries you by the palaces of the American plutocracy. A rather gloomy importance attaches to this route if you happen to be bent — as you probably are, these days — specifically upon visiting the new American wing. For the new American wing is by way of being a monument to our American Golden Age before we foreswore our Anglo-Saxon artistic birthright and ran, vulgarly, to the vacuity of the Beaux Arts, in Paris, and of that Gallic thing known to Gauls as "*le bon gout*". It is also a cenotaph to our democratically emasculated aristocracy.

You get this the more clearly because the immediate entrance to the American addition is via the collection of Italian gimcracks which J. P. Morgan assembled here to set the fashions for Wanamaker's Belle Maison. You go directly from that tawdry, "wop" pomposity into the coolness and serenity of the Anglo-Saxon, somehow real thing, so truly brave of spirit, so truly actual of concept, so truly beautiful of form. And you say: "Here is a handhewn cradle which expresses more of the beauty of mankind and of divinity, too, than a whole show of altar pieces by a del Sarto or a Tintoretto."

There are a handful of rooms to be seen, some of them simple cottage rooms, some of them no less simple manorial halls. You walk from one to another and your heart breaks for the perfect and manly loveliness of the mere articles those people used every day of their lives in our American Golden Age. An art — in the deepest sense — can be great only by virtue of the greatness of the people it served. These rooms, these bits of furniture, these bibelots, were, it is here manifest, the creations and the properties of a great people.

Go to the new American wing. Other museums have more splendors to show you; the Cluny or the Bargello, for example. But this little museum pretends more humbly. More humbly



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and, by your leave, more nobly, too. Go there and you will be thrilled with the hospitality, the honesty, and the virtue of your own kind, a century or so ago, when taste was as impeccable as hearts were stout and friendly.

You may not find it agreeable to walk home again down Fifth Avenue.

## PROVINCIALISMS OF THE MIND

RECENTLY a writer in the London "Times" said of Anatole France that one of the things which gave dimension to his genius was that he was at home in all ages, a cosmopolitan in time. He walked in the Agora at Athens or under the plane trees outside it, in intimate easy converse with Socrates; he was at home on the streets and among the characters of Florence in the great days of the quattrocento. This modern of moderns was at ease with fourth century saints, and talked fluently the language and caught familiarly the passion of Joan of Arc. One of the things that make much of contemporary writing thin and dull is the feeling the reader has that the writers are, in a profound sense, provincial. They can talk only the language of the current mode, understand or imagine only notions for the moment current. They greet as novelties things that were "old stuff" to an educated Roman; everything to them is new under the sun.

In the very age in which travel has become a bourgeois commonplace, we have given up that most delightful and educative of wanderings, meandering through time. How many fresh and vivid things like George Borrow's "Romany Rye" or Thomas Peacock's "Headlong Hall" are left unread on remote shelves, because they were printed yesterday? How many books alive only in their rush and fever, are gobbled up because they are just off the press?

Especially, one feels, is this hunger for recency epidemic in America. Abroad, there is always a sizable public, which the publishers know they can depend on, for simple but lovely editions of old books eternally young. American visitors to England are always astonished to see how unaffectedly Thomas Browne, Marlowe, Dryden, and Swift crop up in the course of bookish conversation. And the allusions are made out of affection, not out of vain erudition.

There are many good reasons why, independently of fashion, one is tempted to read the latest books. They are couched in our language, the thoughts they express are contemporary thoughts, the characters they picture are the recognizable denizens of our own world. Their accents are familiar and their manners our own.

We are not suggesting a flight from contemporary literature. But more and more we realize the truth of the old observation that he who knows no other century does not know even his own. It is striking that the two minds whose sophistication renders them so congenial to our generation, Anatole France and George Bernard Shaw, are steeped in the lore and imagination of the great tradition. How cramped and shallow, in comparison, seem those writers whose universe is bounded by the edge of the passing moment. How thin must be the imagination and how restricted the area of those readers who browse only among these! To how many did it occur, after reading "The Education of Henry Adams", to read the books that educated Henry Adams?

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## REALISM ON THE SCREEN

FIRST the novel, then the stage, and now the screen. Is truth great, and shall it prevail? Or, without caviling, what has realism to do with truth?

Many books have been written about the theatre, and the concensus of opinion is that people go to the theatre to be entertained. This is the opinion of the people who go to the theatre, not necessarily of the ones who are wise in such matters; and should, it seems, be accepted only where other opinions are lacking. But all this is beside the point. Certainly people do go to the theatre; and the other night we went to see "Greed".

Before it became a film, "Greed" was a novel, "McTeague", by Frank Norris. Poor Norris is dead now, so one should not be over-critical of his work, which survives, or of his workmanship, which is fine. Certainly "McTeague" is a better novel than "Greed" is a film; and the ending, which gave itself well to picturization, is worthy of Bret Harte or of other great ones in that period when novels customarily ended so that there was nothing more.

Absolutely nothing: the villains dead or serving life sentences; the man and woman made one, with no hope ever of a break in the monotony of their happiness. It was years before someone added the child to the novel, and decades before that child was born out of wedlock; and many millions of publishers' money before evil was recognized as a necessary quality to a full man, lest he die before his time. Yet life was then much as it is today, for the old adages, unfortunately, still apply.

Now suddenly there has come upon us a drama in which the good, the virtuous, and the sane are lifted bodily out, and we are left with a cast of villains. Two madmen and an hysteric woman battle through life in a violent way to the violent end; the only concession to the old line drama people formerly went to enjoy is merely that all the villains are killed in that end.

This is realism, perhaps. It may even be life as some have found it. Certainly the sex appeal is no greater than in ordinary existence, and the liquor no better. But is it really true? Or is it just that a man with an astigmatism has told us what he saw. . . .

Of course this is faulty reasoning. "Greed" is possibly as true to life as many another play which has erred on the gay side. "Scaramouche", for instance, and "The Iron Horse", and "Monsieur Beaucaire". Only, people go to the theatre (they say) to be entertained.

## WRITERS AND RESPONSIBLE HUMANS

AT an earlier period, as Floyd Dell has recently pointed out apropos of Stephen Crane, the writer was not expected to be as others. But, owing in part to the increasing commercial aspect of authorship, he who writes is now likely to rub shoulders with the rest of us. Yesterday he was your fellow student who recklessly sent forth to the magazines papers written as college assignments — and found that editors paid for them. Today he launches books instead, because the public seems eager to read him. Are you to regard him in different light from your fellow who, finding

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that he possessed salesmanship in another field, has built up contact with the public by means, say, of insurance? Each of the two is serving the public by doing that which he seems most qualified to perform. And each, if he would succeed, is called upon to exercise a like amount of genius in his chosen field.

When you ask your insurance agent to call upon you at ten o'clock on Thursday morning, the sixteenth, you do not expect to have him appear, amiable and — possibly — apologetic, at five o'clock on the afternoon of Wednesday, the twenty eighth. Nor to have him reply to your questions, "Oh, yes — that little paper you asked me to get up — er — now what was it you wanted me to do for you anyhow?" The policy writer pursuing such tactics is not destined as a subject for how-I-succeeded stories. But many an editor who contracts for a manuscript on a given date, has been known to breathe heavily and hope for the best. True, a large number of writers, among them those who represent American literature at its best, regard an assignment as a sacred obligation, a copy date as a binding factor. On the other hand, all too many of the fraternity take shelter under the folds of the tattered mantle of temperament. One may fairly ask: Is there more creative effort involved in constructing a piece of fiction than in initiating and carrying through a plot whereby one talks oneself into the presence of a man who does not want to see one and persuades him to do that which he had not the slightest intention of doing? We have chosen insurance arbitrarily; the professions which afford parallel illustration are innumerable. Yet the very public which, as the result of tradition, regards with an amused shrug the vagaries of the literary, expects from the man of another calling a square facing of his trust. Is it just to the layman — or to those really great men and women who, writers first and last, still see fit to remain responsible human beings?

## OLD STORM AND NEW

TEN years ago, "Des Imagistes — An Anthology" was published by Albert and Charles Boni — and the great free verse controversy was on. Those who can recall those hectic days will remember the strife and the war cries — the inane shouts of "Nothing but shredded prose!" on the one hand, and on the other the ululations of those who saw the new method driving rhyme forever out of the Kingdom of Poetry. It seems curious, now that the dust has settled, to revisualize that departed conflict. Imagism was a bomb, it was a spent rocket, it was something brand new, it had all been done before, it was ridiculous effrontery, it was the New Revelation. But time has gone past since then, and it would take a very naive editor indeed to grow savagely argumentative over the poems in this thin, blue volume — for the free verse movement has suffered the fate of all radical changes in becoming an accepted method of expression, and the original Imagists, as a militant body, are scattered to the winds. Miss Lowell, doughtiest and most pugnacious champion of the movement, is fast becoming a classic. H. D.'s beautiful and austere gift expresses itself as it always did, but the rhythm has grown familiar to our minds and we can enjoy the beauty without quarreling over the suitability of the pattern. Ford Madox Ford

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and William Carlos Williams have both moved much further to the Left than the innovators of 1914 might have thought it possible to march — in fact the group, as a whole, might find each other very strange bedfellows indeed in 1924. There remains the thin blue volume of the "Imagistes" and the fine things in it, as well as the merely shoddy; together with the odd circumstance that, turning over its leaves, one suddenly comes, with curious shock, upon a name, James Joyce — and wonders by what strange freak of circumstance the author of "Ulysses" ever put to sea in such a comparatively calm and orderly galley.

## LECTURE, NOT VAUDEVILLE

THE array of stout, idle, cultivated ladies who always compose the vast majority of any lecture audience didn't know quite what to make of it. They had come — with that casual curiosity which draws one indifferently to travelogues punctuated by colored slides and a long pointer, discussion of invisible exercise, or tidy, semi-humorous chats on "What to Read and What to Avoid" — to hear one of the chief poets of our time discuss "The Supernatural in Fiction". Poets were so amusing. Sometimes they bellowed, more often they were embarrassed and nervous — odd creatures, badly dressed (for weren't they always poor? — so sweet of them!) — hunting around the dome of the amphitheatre with timid, uncertain eyes. And this poet in particular — didn't he write about midgets and children and other fabulous creatures? Perhaps — exciting thought! — he would prove to be a midget himself, or elfin — a tiny, aerial creature one could put to bed in a cabbage leaf. Or — he must be so fond of kiddies — a bland and jocoso-hearty Uncle Wiggily with a fund of benevolent anecdotes which one could retail to Junior later in place of the usual radio bedtime story. They creaked with expectation.

On the platform, a little later, a slight, dark haired man, inconspicuously garmented — a man whom any stout lady could pass in a crowd without a second glance unless she happened to notice the humor of the eyes or the extraordinary youthfulness of the face — stood, reading from a certain number of typewritten pages. The pleasant, slightly monotonous voice went on without tricks of oratory, building a house of calm and quiet words whose windows opened upon a vast and troubled landscape: the landscape which lies beyond the clouded glass windows of the senses, on the marches of the unseen. The ladies seemed a trifle uneasy, for knowledge, sincerity, and mirth were apparent in what the voice said, and these are things one does not look for in lectures. The masculine and reticent countenance gave little opportunity for sentimental speculations. A poet should be quaint and a little foolish. But here was a poet whose sense and wit were as evident as his vivid curiosity toward every aspect of human existence — a poet who would neither roar nor coo in either of the two fashions allowed to poets — and it seemed a little too unexpected, somehow.

Later, however, crowding up to have their books autographed, they forgave him for his sense and wit. After all, as long as one's books are autographed, it doesn't really matter so much that the person who autographs them — in this case, Walter de la Mare — has been too unfairly

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genuine to pose like a literary mannequin after the accepted fashion.

## PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE SOUL

JEAN-JACQUES was mistaken. "I have entered on a performance", said he, "which is without example, whose accomplishment will have no imitator. I mean to present my fellow mortals with a man in all the integrity of nature; and this man shall be myself." He has had an imitator, and his name is Sherwood Anderson. He too knows his heart and he has studied mankind, and he is not ashamed to reveal himself as God made him. When the last trumpet shall sound he too may present himself before the Sovereign Judge with this book in hand and say what Jean-Jacques alleged he would say: "Thus have I acted; these were my thoughts; such was I."

"A Story Teller's Story" will not make in the world the noise the "Confessions" made, but it is quite as interesting and illuminating. Indeed, as a personality analysis it is equal to the "Confessions", and as a soul synthesis it excels it.

Literature of the generation now passing has been a breeding farm of romantic autobiographies and autobiographical romances. Finally it has turned out two winners, Marcel Proust and Sherwood Anderson. One reinvoked his memories, revived the sensations that accompanied the recalled occurrences, and made record of them; the other lifted layer by layer the veil that concealed nature from a poet's eye by recalling the vagrant thoughts, hopes, ideas, that have flowed from a kindly heart to an understanding head during forty years, and set them down for our edification.

Anyone who would know the simplicities of the soul and the complexities of the mind may get help from "A Story Teller's Story". Anyone who would understand the meaning of the word "urge" as used by the biologist will find enlightenment there. Some of the primitive urges of man are not very potent in Sherwood Anderson. An urge to write replaces them. "I am one who loves, like a drunkard his drink, the smell of ink, and the sight of a great pile of white sheets that may be scrawled over with words always gladdens me." He speaks of the consoling power of ink and paper as a man talks of a mistress.

So many things are to be learned from this portrait of the artist in maturity: it is a *vade mecum* of the laws of heredity; it summarizes many of the theories of psychoanalysis; it is a battlefield of conflicts with the battle in full swing.

The book is dedicated to a man who has materially advanced the art of photography, by a man who has signally advanced photography of the soul.

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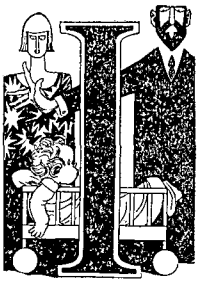
# SPILLED BEANS

## By Robert Benchley

*With Sketches by Herb Roth*

### II: THE "I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER" GAME



IT hurts us more than it does May Sinclair to include her among those authors who have, by carrying the trick pitcher once too often to the well, rendered it unfit to hold water. Her passages of childhood reminiscence in "Mary Olivier", effectively placed in the second person, were so fine that one was greedy for more. Well, one *got* more. Gradually the thing has lost its salt through much repetition and now we find ourselves doing the following in our sleep:

### JOHN DWANLEY: A LIFE

I

YOU were very cold and it seemed to be a big room full of windows in which you suddenly found yourself. Someone was spanking you. Hard. This was rather rough, seeing how short a time you had been in the room. Then you heard the doctor say: "It's a boy!" And, sure enough, you were.

II

You were lying in a crib with something in your mouth. It couldn't have been your overshoe, because you had no overshoe. Something wet and soft, like rubber. By George, it *was* rubber! It was that thing on the end of the bottle which Nanna always left in your mouth when she went outside to speak to the postman. It had a lot of pretty good stuff in it which kept trickling out from the corners of your lips and down over your chin onto the front of your dress. Dress indeed! Here you were, a three weeks' old boy, and they still had you in dresses! Rotten, you called it.

Still, it was nice to be left alone in the big room. You could think. You could think about Things. The world, for instance. And life. Ah, there was something to think about till your head snapped. Life!

What was behind it all? Heraclitus, you had been given to understand, claimed that everything was Fire, or, at any rate, in a state of flux like fire. Perhaps he was right.

Still, how could you reconcile Heraclitus with Plato? If Plato's Idea was fundamentally sound, how could Everything, including Truth, be in a state of Fire-flux? There must be *something* stable, *something* with Reality.

The problem worried you so that you rolled over on your face and cried.



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Nanna came running in and thought you needed changing. Why couldn't she understand that it was Heraclitus that had thrown you into this state?

Something flew in at the window. Something big and dark, with an ulster on. It was Papa.

III

A tremendous space of time elapses. Those wishing tea will find it for sale at the entrance hall.

IV

You were fifteen, and something was the matter with Papa. Something was always the matter with Papa. Mildred said that it was his kidneys, but Mildred was a girl. What did she know? And besides, Mildred wore brown stockings and black shoes.

You liked Papa, in a quiet sort of way, but you were never quite sure who he was. Sometimes he was a tall man, with a big, black mustache. Other times he was short and fat, and smelled of spearmint. That was good, when Papa smelled of spearmint. It meant that there was going to be fish for dinner, and you loved fish.

You also loved Jesus.

V

Steemish was sitting on your chest and pounding your face in the mud. It was heavy mud, like the frosting on the cake that Nanna used to bring you when you had been naughty. Steemish was in your Latin class and thought that you were a rotter. Perhaps you were.

"Sock him, Steemish!" Leftwich Major was saying.

"Bust him, Steemish old man", Leftwich Minor cried.

It seemed as if the whole world were on top of your chest. You didn't like school anyway. To go away, to run wildly across the moors, to jump up and down in an open boat, to know and inquire into life, that was what you wanted. Anything to get Steemish off your chest.

And then suddenly it was your nineteenth birthday.

VI

Mamma was sitting in the coal scuttle. Papa had put her there only five minutes before and had told her to be good. It was an old coal scuttle and was full of coal, so there wasn't much room for Mamma.

She said: "John, get me a book to read", in a tone which indicated that she was getting restless. You hated it when Mamma got restless, because you were only twenty seven and there wasn't much that you could do to amuse her except draw pictures. You drew very well for twenty seven, but not well enough for twenty eight.

"Look, Mamma", you said. "Want to see me draw you and Papa wrestling?" "Get me a book to read" Mamma repeated dully. "One with illustrations." Then Mildred came in. She had been smoking and her fur coat was still cold from the fog It gave off the cold, like a big dog the big dog you used to own when you lived in Bayswater.

Rena had lived in Bayswater.

VII

Upstairs a door opened and shut Then it opened again. It was Rena coming in and going out. Rena was your wife. You had been married ten years. It didn't seem more than a hundred.

You couldn't quite remember how you came to marry Rena. It was a dark afternoon and the fog had been very heavy. Perhaps that was it, the

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*"Rena had taken you out to see the swans in the park"*



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heavy fog. Of course, that was it. Funny that you had never thought of that before. The heavy fog. And then Rena.

There was something moving in the room. From where you lay in your crib you couldn't quite make out what it was. The crib was the same one that you used to lie in when you were much younger than you were now. It had bars on it like the omac's cage in the Zoological Gardens, and if you lay at just the right angle you could make believe that you were on the outside and that Rena was in a cage. Wouldn't that be fine!

VIII

After all, where would God be?

There wasn't much that you could do about it, wherever He was, but you would just like to know. If Death was the end of everything and if Peace lay within Oneself, then what about the swans in the park? Only yesterday Rena had taken you out to see the swans in the park. It was your forty ninth birthday, and Rena had promised you something nice if you would finish your oatmeal. The swans in the park were the nicest thing that you could think of; so Rena had taken you there in your new suit. Although you were only forty nine, you took a fifty five year old size suit. "He is big for his age", Rena had said to the gate keeper. This made you very proud.

IX

One night you were awakened by a hand reaching through the bars of your crib. It was a big hand, like the locomotive you saw when they took you down to the locomotive works.

"Come, get up, Grandpa", somebody said. "It's time for your piano lesson."

You hated your piano lessons. They always came when you wanted most to play. But this time it wasn't a piano lesson, for the hand did not belong to your teacher, Miss Marston, but to a big man in a denim suit. Slowly you got out of your crib and put on your rompers.

"You are sure that he will have all the books and magazines he needs?" Rena was saying to the man.

"More than he needs", the man replied. "Come on, Grandpa," he said, turning to you, "you and I are going to run up to the corner and back and see who beats."

That would be fun, you thought. And the best of it all was that Rena couldn't run on account of those things she wore on her feet, "shoes" she called them, "these damned shoes".

Goodby, Rena!

X

After all, it was nice to be left alone in the big room. You could think. Perhaps Heraclitus *was* right, and Plato wrong. You probably never would know.

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# NOVELIST OR BOND SALESMAN

*Letters to an Anxious Mother*

## By W. Somerset Maugham

xxx, Beacon Street, Boston,
The Twenty Third of September,
Nineteen Hundred and Twenty Four.

MY DEAR MR. MAUGHAM:—I trust that you will pardon a total stranger writing to you and will give a few minutes of your time to answering a question which I am going to put to you. I am sure that you are very busy and I would not take the liberty of asking your advice if I were not fully determined to take it. To cut a long story short my son is about to leave Harvard and has determined to adopt a literary career. His intention is to write chiefly fiction and I should be very grateful if you would tell me in a few words what you would recommend him to do now. I am anxious to do everything in my power to assist him. Cordially yours,

FRANCES VAN BUREN HALE.

Hotel Gotham,
New York City,
*Sept.* 27, 1924.

MY DEAR MRS. HALE:—

Give your son one thousand dollars a year for five years and tell him to go to the devil. Yours very faithfully,

W. S. MAUGHAM.

xxx, Beacon Street, Boston,
The Thirtieth of September,
Nineteen Hundred and Twenty Four.

MY DEAR MR. MAUGHAM:—

I am entirely at a loss to understand your answer to my letter. I do not think that my request was unreasonable and I cannot think it deserved a reply which if I hesitate to call uncivil you will not be surprised if I consider strangely flippant in a writer of your standing in the literary world. I regret that I troubled you and beg to remain Yours truly,

FRANCES VAN BUREN HALE.

Hotel Gotham,
New York City,
*Oct.* 2, 1924.

MY DEAR MRS. HALE:—

I am much grieved that you were displeased with my answer. I had no wish to be impolite and I was very much in earnest; I was brief, which I thought you wished me to be, and I gave you advice which I knew to be direct and which I thought was sensible. Your son is about to leave Harvard and therefore may be presumed to possess at least the elements of a liberal education; I can imagine no better grounding for anyone who desires to be a writer, and from your letter I judge that he has been brought up in easy circumstances. He will doubtless have spent most of his life among ladies and gentlemen. This is a class which from a literary standpoint rests now under a cloud and I daresay it merits the contempt of that large body of writers who do not belong to it; but after all it ventures still to exist (though judging from the plays I have lately seen in New York and the novels I have read you would hardly suspect it) and it is well



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for the writer to know its habits and customs. It is possible even that he may wish to write about it. I am prepared to believe that life is more significant in a delicatessen store than in an apartment on Park Avenue and that the emotions of a truck driver are more subtle than those of a person of quality; but there *are* persons of quality and there *are* apartments on Park Avenue and the writer is wise who regards nothing human as alien to him.

So far so good.

Your son, I suppose, has led a sheltered life and at his age he can hardly have much knowledge of the world. I do not know how you can better help him to acquire this than by taking the advice I gave you. On a thousand dollars a year he cannot starve, but if he is of an adventurous disposition (and unless he is he will not desire to be a writer) he will often find himself penniless and so obliged to do whatever he can to get his dinner. That is not bad training. On this sum he can travel all over the world, but only under conditions which will throw him in contact with all sorts and kinds of men. He will not be able to afford the luxury of respectability. Besides, in telling him to go to the devil you will have explained to him that you mean him to attach the widest possible meaning to that hackneyed phrase. If he has any spirit he will soon find an infinite number of ways and means to carry out your suggestion and in five years he will have gathered experience and an acquaintance with men and women which cannot fail to be of great value to him as a writer. If at the end of this period he cannot write then you must console yourself with the reflection that he lacks what no thought of yours nor advice of mine can give him: talent.

Yours very faithfully,
W. S. MAUGHAM.

xxx, Beacon Street, Boston,
October the Fifth,
Nineteen Hundred and Twenty Four.

DEAR MR. MAUGHAM:—

I am sorry if I seemed a little abrupt but I will frankly confess that I could make neither head nor tail of your first letter. Of course I see now that you had no wish to be discourteous or flippant. But all the same I do not think I quite agree with the things you say. Surely it is not necessary for a writer to live in an extraordinary manner any more than it is necessary for a violinist to wear long hair. Miss Austen wrote her admirable novels without ever leaving the respectable circle in which she was born and Mr. Henry James whose novels I am sure you appreciate as highly as I do both in England and America never to my knowledge moved in any world but that to which he was entitled by his birth and position. It has been my privilege to know Mrs. Wharton for many years and though she has lived so long in France I can vouch from personal knowledge for the fact that she has never ceased to be a refined and accomplished gentlewoman. I cannot help thinking this proves that there is no reason why a writer with talent should not write a successful book without taking such a hazardous course as you propose for my son.

But I daresay I did not put my original question quite clearly. What I really wanted your advice about was more the technique of novel writing if you understand what I mean. This is a matter on which a young writer naturally stands in need of guidance and I can only say on my behalf as well as on my son's that I should be sincerely grateful for any hints you can give him.

Yours most cordially,
FRANCES VAN BUREN HALE.

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Hotel Gotham,
New York City,
*Oct.* 10, 1924.

DEAR MRS. HALE:—

I am somewhat embarrassed to know how to answer your letter, since in the last seventeen years I have written but four novels and so can only look upon myself as an amateur: I am sure that there are a great many people who are much better qualified than me to give your son hints on this difficult matter. All I can usefully do is to tell you what is my own practice, and the first thing that strikes me is that I have no habitual practice; it seems to me that every novel must be written in an entirely different fashion, and so far as I am concerned each one is in a way no more than an experiment. Each subject needs a different treatment, a different attitude, and even a different manner of writing. The only rule I know which is always valid is to stick to your point like grim death. Much harm has been done to the art of fiction by the opinion widely held some years ago that the novel was a suitable vehicle for ventilating every sort of view and advocating any kind of theory. Writers who wanted to preach sermons, urge reforms, or castigate abuses threw their ideas into the form of fiction. They produced a large number of very tedious novels. I cannot help thinking that to entertain is sufficient ambition for the novelist, and it is certainly one which is hard to achieve; if he can tell a good story and create characters that are fresh and living he has done enough to make the reader grateful. I certainly find in myself no urge to reform, admonish, or instruct my fellow men, and if I desire information about town planning or the Montessori system I shall not look for it in the pages of a novel.

You will not have failed to notice that many novels are written which have every possible excellence and yet are quite unreadable. I hope you will not think it a wilful eccentricity when I tell you that I look upon readableness as the highest merit that a novel can have. They say that it is better for women to be good than to be clever; that is a point upon which I have never been able to make up my mind; but I am quite sure that it is better for a novel to be readable than to be good and clever. I have often wondered what it is exactly that gives a book this quality. I will not tell you all the conclusions I have come to but only one or two points which seem to me to tend to that admirable result.

I think first of all that the writer is wise to be brief. I like a novel which can be read at a sitting and for my part, when I am writing one, I use every device I know to persuade the reader to do this. Then I think he should pay greater attention to his form than English and American novelists—influenced by the heresy that the novel is a ragbag into which can be thrown any matter that comes along—habitually do. If so many novels nowadays did not start without a beginning and leave off without an ending it would seem absurd to point out that a good novel should have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and all its parts should be duly balanced. A novel should have an inner harmony and there is no reason why the reader should be deprived of the delight which he may obtain from a beautiful proportion. In this connection I strongly recommend your son to read Carl Van Vechten's "The Tattooed Countess". He will find in it a model of form which alone makes the book a pleasure to read; and he will find also ingenious characterization and an enchanting humor. He cannot read it attentively without obtaining from it valuable in-

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struction, profit and edification. It is a perfect example of perhaps the most difficult book to write: the light novel.

I think the writer is well advised who writes simply. I would have him use the plainest words and put them in the most natural order. I have no patience with the writers who employ bizarre constructions and make a parade of unusual epithets; nothing goes out of fashion so quickly as affectation nor is anything so stilted as the modish phrase of the year before last. I know one eminent novelist who spends much time studying all manner of dictionaries in order to find unexpected words. I cannot imagine a more trivial occupation. I have noticed that the writers who use these odd and extraordinary words do not always know their meaning. I knew another writer, now happily dead and forgotten, who was so eager to be distinguished that he wrote "ends and odds" for "odds and ends". Let not your son be afraid of the hackneyed phrase; it may very well be the most suitable. Above all he should be clear. I do not think the writer has a right to ask the reader to puzzle over his meaning. If he knows it himself he can put it in plain terms; if he is unwilling to do this he must be very sure that it is profound enough to repay the reader's trouble when he has got to the bottom of it. Nothing is so tiresome as the obscurity which envelops a commonplace. But let not your son think that if he writes soberly, clearly, and plainly he must eschew beauty: Swift achieved an admirable style by using the simplest words and by putting them in the most natural order. It is not the resounding epithet which makes good English, but the accurate and sensitive ear.

I am afraid that these suggestions will seem unsatisfactory and haphazard to you. They are what immediately occurred to me; but of course the subject is complicated and you must not for a moment think that I imagine I have said all that there is to be said about it.

Yours very faithfully,
W. S. MAUGHAM.

xxx, Beacon Street, Boston,
The Thirteenth of October,
Nineteen Hundred and Twenty Four.

DEAR MR. MAUGHAM:—

It is very good of you to have written me such a long and careful letter, but since I wrote to you last my son has decided to go into the bond business. I do not suppose that you will leave this country without coming to Boston and when you do Mr. Hale and I will have much pleasure in making your acquaintance. I shall be At Home on the first and third Wednesdays of the month all through the winter.

Yours most cordially,
FRANCES VAN BUREN HALE.

P.S. I am surprised at your writing *than me.* Surely it should be *than I.*

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# A BOY'S BOOK RAMBLES

## By Theodore Roosevelt

*Three kinds of companions—men, women and books,*
*Were enough, said the elderly Sage, for his ends.*

AT least so he was quoted by Andrew Lang, who was a delightful man, a book lover, and a fisherman. The inference from this remark is that the "elderly sage" has a corner on these companions. He has not. The boys and girls who are neither "elderly" nor "sage" can make claim at least to books as companions. I will admit that men and women rarely form companions for boys and girls. When we were little our mother and father were about all the grown up associates we had. Occasionally some male guest would "meteorlike flash lawless through the void", and assume for us a brief aspect of companionship. One of these in particular sticks in my mind. He was an Australian. I have forgotten his name. All through one lazy summer afternoon he told us fascinating stories of man eating sharks. Another, a political friend of my father, recited to us, with great feeling and proper emphasis on the bloody part, the battle of Lake Regillus. Naturally, he too endeared himself to us very much. In the main, however, our grown up companions consisted of my parents. It was they who introduced us to the third in the list given by Andrew Lang, namely, "books".

Ours was a household built around two book lovers. I could no more imagine my mother and father without a book by them than I could imagine Queen Elizabeth without a ruff. Their reading was omnivorous. Their tastes, however, led them along somewhat different lines. My mother was particularly fond of poetry and memoirs. She was also a real student of the Elizabethan dramatists. I think I have never met anyone better versed in their plays. My first glimpses of the grandeur of Marlowe's "mighty line" and of the sweetness of Beaumont and Fletcher's "Faithful Shepherdess" were given me by her. My father's taste ran more toward history and science, in the broadest sense of the term. He loved poetry, but inclined toward the epic or ballad type, the "Chanson de Roland", or the "Saga of King Olaf". He also loved a good detective story or one about boxing. Both of them felt that books were a part of everyday life, not a thing apart from it. We therefore talked about them at meals, named dogs or nicknamed people from characters in them, and chanted sonorously the "Lay of the Last Minstrel", or some kindred verses, when we rode horseback. We were taught to be careful of books, but books did not gather the dust at Sagamore Hill.

There are two ways in which children become acquainted with books: they are read aloud to, or read to themselves. Books were read to me when I was very little, long before I could read myself. This reading aloud was done in the main by Mother. Father



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did not have the time. It was by this method that I first came to know a book that not only played a large part in my childhood but has remained a steadfast friend ever since, "Pilgrim's Progress". Mother read it to me in her room in the late afternoons. She sat in a comfortable rocking chair and I sat in her lap. By us there was a mirror that belonged originally to her grandfather. It was, according to modern standards, a rather small mirror, but when it was first brought to this country it was considered so remarkable for its size that strangers passing on the streets of New York used to ring the door bell and ask to have it shown them. There in Mother's room, rocking to and fro, I first met Christian, Faithful, Valiant-for-Truth, and all the other living allegories that go to make up that very remarkable work. I can remember to this day my genuine grief over the sad fate of Faithful at Vanity Fair, and my intense excitement over the Giant Despair. Mother did not read this book to me once and then put it away; she read it to me again and again, as a book of such value should be read. I think, of all my early books, Bunyan's masterpiece had the greatest influence on me. Like good food, it "stuck to the ribs", and I have continued to read and reread it ever since. Of course, in those days, the allegory entirely escaped me. The characters were to me real men and women. Like many another book, I believe it is read by a child with one viewpoint, and later on by that same child, when grown up, with an entirely different viewpoint.

Among other books that Mother read to me were Scott's novels, selections from Hawthorne, much of Washington Irving, and poetry of all sorts and kinds. As I think of those times a veritable procession passes through my mind. Irving's "Conquest of Granada" stands ticketed by itself, because it was read to me during periods of unwilling inactivity forced on us children immediately after lunch by family edict. "The Red Fisherman" introduced me first to Praed. "Ivanhoe" I remember chiefly because I had great difficulty in keeping from bursting into tears at the fate which so nearly overtook the old Jew. This would never have done, since my sister was there, and before one's sister it is permissible to cry only with rage. From "The Talisman" I got an affection and loyalty for Richard Cœur de Lion that stubbornly resisted for many years the cold facts of history on that far from estimable man. At that time also many fairy stories were read to me. The ones that I cared for most were those of Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen. Next to these I think I liked Joel Chandler Harris's stories. They were coming out, as I recall it, in the Sunday "Sun". Mother used to read them to all of us each Sunday. Last, but not least, the Bible was of course read to us. I suppose I got a great deal out of it by absorption, but I did not care for it nearly so much as I did for "Pilgrim's Progress" or "Little Mister Thimble-finger". The parts of the Good Book I liked were the bloody battles. I liked Jehu, the son of Nimshi, who drove furiously. I liked Saul, David, Ahab, and Deborah. As far as the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon were concerned, I merely tolerated them.

These books that were read aloud to me formed the cornerstone of my later reading.

Akin to reading aloud was the way my father gave me an insight into various bits of literature and history. As I have said, ordinarily he did not

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have enough time to read to us. But upon special occasions he did. Once when my mother was sick he acted, as he termed it, as "vice mother" and read "Rob Roy" to us. At rare intervals he would read us poetry. The poems were those which he himself liked, generally of a martial strain. Once he read "The Old Sergeant" by Willson, with great emphasis. It struck me as a very sad poem but as one that I liked particularly. The other day I read it to an assorted group of my own children. I am sorry to say I don't think they liked it as much as I did.

Reading aloud, however, was not the usual course of events with my father. He used rather to recite poems or narrate incidents of history. The first poetry that I got by heart he taught me in this fashion. That was, of course, when I was very little, before I knew how to read. While he was dressing in the evening, I would come to his room. There he would teach me the poems of which he was fond, by word of mouth, as the old minstrels taught. Sometimes, in learning poems in this way, I got words or phrases wrong and did not find out what was correct until, at a later date, I read the original. In "The Rhyme of the Three Sealers" by Kipling, there is a line that runs:

> And we'll come into the game again —
> with a double deck to play.

Until I read the poem to myself, I thought it was "doubled fist", not "a double deck". I knew nothing about cards then, but I did know that when you were mad you doubled your fist. Among the poems that Father taught me were "Sheridan's Ride", "The Sinking of the Cumberland", "The Rhyme of the Three Sealers", and fragments of the "Saga of King Olaf". Of these, I liked particularly the "Saga of King Olaf". Like all children, I invariably placed myself as one of the characters in whatever book or poem I might be reading. In this "Saga" I was always undecided as to whether I wished to be Olaf or Einar. I was quite sad because my hair was short and brown and interfered with my sense of identity with Einar when I would chant to myself those lines:

> Loose his golden locks were flying, bright his
> armor gleamed, —
> Like St. Michael overthrowing Lucifer, he
> seemed.

I used to envy my brother Kermit his golden hair. As soon as I learned to read, I got a funny little old fashioned, battered, blue-covered copy of Longfellow and read the entire "Saga". From that time to the present day, I have always taken great pleasure in this poem. There are many who sniff at it and say it is not poetry, but to me it has a real ring of arms. In it I can see those far removed ancestors of ours with their virtues and their failings.

In addition to teaching me poetry, Father used to describe to me various of the great battles of history. When I walked down to his office in Washington with him, at the age of six or seven, he used to draw plans of these battles for me, in the dust of the gutter, with an umbrella tip or with the toe of his boot. As soon as I had learned to read easily, I searched for the histories in which I could find the account of these battles, and studied them.

Before I could read, therefore, Mother and Father had introduced me to certain books and poems, all of which stuck in my mind and gave a trend to my reading. If I were to pick the two which were most constantly in my thought, I should select the "Saga of King Olaf", among the poems, and

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among the books, by all odds, "Pilgrim's Progress".

After those early days I began to read to myself more and more. We children used to read in our rooms after being sent upstairs to bed. It was before the days of electric lights, and we had to read by candles. Mother always made the rounds of the children's rooms before she went to bed to see that everything was all right. When we heard her coming we would hastily blow out the candle, put the book under the pillow, and pretend to be asleep. Mother had far too many children, however, to be so easily hoodwinked. She would sniff the air, and if she could detect the smell of a recently extinguished candle no excuses went. When we moved to Albany in '99, after my father had been elected governor, we found electric light in the governor's house. This was the first time we had ever had electric lights. They were a godsend to us children, for, since an extinguished electric light leaves no smell, they meant we were safe from detection.

At this time, I wandered all over the place in my reading. I picked up a lot of Indian folk tales in various collections. I was inspired by George Bird Grinnell, who gave me his book "Blackfoot Lodge Tales". From these I drifted, naturally, to tales of adventure, such as "Jack, the Young Ranchman", "The Painted Desert", "Afloat in a Forest", "The Swiss Family Robinson", and dear old "Robinson Crusoe". "Blackfoot Lodge Tales" did me a real service, for it started me on folk lore and culture myths, which I have read and studied ever since.

Meanwhile, largely through the impetus given to my thoughts by my father, I became interested in natural history. That, of course, opened up an endless vista of reading. I read books on birds, on animals, on insects. I met John Burroughs, Frank Chapman, and many another, at this time. The pursuit, curiously enough, led me indirectly to one of the books that influenced me very greatly. One day, when I was talking about natural history to Mother, she suggested that I read "The Cruise of the Beagle". I did, and liked it very much. Upon putting it back in the bookcase, I noticed next to it "The Origin of Species". Since I had enjoyed the former, I took a chance on the latter. It was hard going, but by appealing to my father for the meaning of puzzling passages, I got the general drift. It led me, at a later day, to much reading along the same lines.

A short while after, I found Gibbon. His acquaintance was also due to chance. Like all families, we had some remnants of inherited libraries composed of sets, of which Father and Mother already had copies. One day, my aunt Emily was looking over some old books, boxed in the attic, which had been left her. Among them, in brown covers, was a set of Gibbon. I stood handy, and fell heir to it. From pride of possession, as much as anything else, I burrowed into the first volume. It fascinated me. Here was no dry-as-dust history where dates and constitutional acts followed one another in dreary rotation. Here was a history written in such a manner that the characters leaped from the pages as living people. It provided me with the backbone of my reading for one entire summer. It permanently fixed my preference for historians like Greene, Freeman, or Macaulay, and against such as Hume or Mommsen.

Meanwhile, of course, I was wandering with delight through poetry. In poetry, my taste ran very much along

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the line of my father's. Martial ballads appealed to me most. There is now on my bookshelf at home a treasured volume of "Poems of American Patriotism" collected by Brander Matthews. He gave it to me when I was six years old. His signature on the flyleaf is witnessed by H. C. Bunner and W. D. Howells. Scott's verses also I loved. I used to shout them while taking my cold bath in the morning. Hopping up and down on the slippery floor of the "splash closet", testing the shower with one toe, I accompanied Buccleuch and won the "valley of Esk from its mouth to its source". At times, as I rode on my pony through the lovely Oyster Bay woods, I pursued the Stag with "two dogs of black St. Hubert's breed". At others, with Macaulay's Grey Charger I sought "the southern mountains, the mountains of my home", or else I "brought the good news from Ghent to Aix". The "Ballad Book" and Percy's "Reliques" also furnished many characters for country-living children to impersonate.

In those days a book was a book. I had no feeling that its age or association contributed anything to it above what the printed word gave.

Old books are best! with what delight
Does "Faithorne fecit" greet our sight —

meant nothing to me. The delights of first editions, of the smell of old leather, of autographed copies, were all reserved for later years.

Such, in brief, are some of my early book memories. They came early, for, as I have said, Father and Mother believed that books were an important part of life. I have carried these memories only down to the year I was twelve, for then occurred the first great break in my life. I went to boarding school and other influences and associations began to be felt. I cannot place my hand definitely on any particular thing that any individual book has helped me to accomplish. I do know this—that they have been an endless source of pleasure to me through every chance or mischance. I cannot help but feel also that "Pilgrim's Progress", the "Saga of King Olaf", Gibbon's history, and "The Origin of Species" make very good, sturdy companions for anyone traveling through life.

## SUNDAY MORNING

By Laura Benét

BELL tones, sharp and high,
(Hypodermics, pricking the dulled stuff of thought),
Set female minds tingling;
Man lies in hiding with newspapers
Dreaming of Mondays;
In the square church's decorous matinée
For the maid and the matron
Will one stripped soul, bitterly sweeping her house,
Find her lost spiritual money?

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# PHILOSOPHY FOR THE LAWLESS

## By Irwin Edman

EDITOR'S NOTE: *There is much talk of new codes, of changing ideals, of moral standards overthrown, of culture dismembered. From this chaos of ideas, championed largely by our restless postwar youth, many of us have believed a calm thought will rise. Just what standards, codes, philosophies will result, is speculative. In a series of articles, of which this is the first, Dr. Edman attempts to point the way, to analyze the present unrest and prophesy a possible stability.*

THERE has been reported from colleges all over the country an increasing interest in the study of philosophy. Public forums and institutions of adult education find as responsive and eager attention to the wider questions of life and destiny as to specific discussions of the reform of judicial procedure or the short ballot. A distinguished foreign philosopher like Bertrand Russell comes to this country and fills a large auditorium to standing room with a question no more caught in the immediate tangle of current affairs than "Life and Mechanism". Even the daily lucubrations of Dr. Frank Crane and his fellow sermonizers in print are significant. These quotidian commentaries are, after a fashion, philosophy; they attempt to deal with ultimate questions for the ultimate and average consumer.

One wonders what the young intelligence of our time expects from a study that has from the days of ancient Athens been popularly dismissed as foolish or useless. Is it possible that metaphysics has come into its own? Is it credible that the lay intelligence has discovered that "philosophy is not harsh or crabbed as dull fools suppose"? What does the now notorious younger generation want of philosophy and what may it hope to find?

It appears to me that the fresh minds of our time are turning to philosophy in the hope of finding there the fruits of which the rebellions of this and previous younger generations have sown the seeds. They are seeking a synthesis out of all those atoms of insight or destruction which have characterized contemporary thought. They wish to piece together a mosaic of a faith by which they may live, out of those twin operations of the present intellectual spirit, discovery and disillusion. I believe they may out of contemporary thinking find such a synthesis. But what they wish and what they can find, may perhaps be better understood if we endeavor first to discover what it is of which they feel the lack, and what it is of which they have been robbed by the current disillusion.

The business of a younger generation has long been conceived to be that of rebellion. The middle aged, by tradition, insist on the sacredness of the accredited tables of the law; the young are characteristically pictured in the operation of breaking them. But for us of this generation there is indeed very little rebellion left to do. From the break up of the Middle Ages to the present, idol smashing has been a favorite occupation of the intelligent. In the last



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twenty five years that exciting enterprise has been incredibly accelerated. From all sides the forces of criticism and attack have come. Their object has been every conceivable fixed tradition. The sources of disillusion have been many, and by this time the disillusion has become depressingly general. The human race, especially that young and energetic portion of it by which the world's work is kept going, has never been able to live without some faith, even if it were faith in a fiction. And we are, I think, beginning to note the turn toward a search for a saving and reconstructive wisdom. From disrespect for the old foolish laws, we are turning to look for some law of reason to regulate our lives.

It would, I believe, be difficult to find an educated and sensitive young mind of our day who has not passed through the tumult of most of the possible disillusions. Nearly a half century ago Matthew Arnold wrote about living between two worlds, one dead and one powerless to be born. We are, half a century later, still living between those two worlds, and the number of things that are dead have been increased by the killing arts of irony and information. We are beginning to suspect that if the process of assassination goes on much further, we may be killing our own souls. In killing our faiths we are killing ourselves. For it is in its living faiths that the life of the spirit consists.

The central moving faith that has for most young minds collapsed is, broadly speaking, religion. In the late nineteenth century it was evolution and physics that made theology impossible. With the maturing youth of our day it is anthropology and Anatole France. It is no longer so much questions of the existence and goodness of God that worry the skeptic; he is fretted by the ironies and contradictions of his own mind. Frazer in "The Golden Bough", Lévy-Bruhl in "Primitive Mentality", George Foot Moore in "The Birth and Growth of Religion", to mention only a few, have revealed to us some horrifying analogies. One cannot resist an ironic comparison between our noblest ceremonies and the bloodiest of primitive rituals, between our holiest mysteries and the grossest of savage superstitions. No informed mind and sensitive spirit can go through even a modicum of anthropological literature without having this corruption of comparative irony eat into his faith. Whatever reconciliations the skeptic makes for himself between religion and science, whatever wistful hold he makes on the nobilities and idealisms enshrined in traditional religion, he can no longer take that tradition literally. He has passed from naïveté to criticism, and if he returns to belief it will be as a critical believer.

It required, perhaps, only this central faith to go, for all those minor faiths by which men live to follow. Religion which, as Henry Adams saw it, was the keystone in the arch of mediæval life, remained so, many centuries afterward, in the emotions of men. And when one begins to be skeptical about the cosmos, skepticism in other fields is easy. In moral questions, it does not take long for the young to make pertinent and terrible interrogations. It is indeed easier to check up in experience codes of expected moral action than to check up on the attributes of God. God is, after all, in His heaven, but the traditional moral standards and their fruits can be observed here upon earth.

The young mind, resolute and free, does not take long to realize that many

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of the traditional moral standards are fixed catchwords and labels by which the spontaneous impulses of human beings are molded to the expected social tradition. It is not for nothing that the anthropologists have shown how similar are the prohibitions and approvals of our own society to those cruel compulsive rituals and taboos by which primitive man was regimented into the traditions of his tribe. The old fixities in the relationship of the sexes, of the family and of the social classes, property and the accustomed proprieties, have all come into question. It has become clearer and clearer that the acceptance of many of these rises not from reason in theory or splendor in practice, but from the squalid fears and compulsions of the tribe. Respect for many of the current taboos or commendations seems to the young emancipated to place them in a class with the cave man and the gorilla. There has been a reversion from high words to the festering rottenness which exalted gospel faintly covers and perfumes. The young freeman looks every gift horse in the mouth, including those of tradition, which the middle aged, the most contemporary of our ancestors, have brought to us down the stream of time.

What holds true of morals holds true likewise of that field of social and political action in which, after all, moral distinctions are tried out and made effectual. How painfully naive seems that faith in humanity and humanity's reform by itself, shared with a clear and noble fervor by such giants as Comte and John Stuart Mill. A humanity whose intelligence is rotted by its own inner darknesses and blindnesses! How can we out of poor bundles of chaos expect clarity and light? Psychoanalysis has almost revived a doctrine of original sin. The devils that lie in the dark heart of each of us will hardly generate an angelic society.

And if we are naive enough to expect it, one look at the outer political scene is enough to discourage the most hearty. In peace, patriotism is turned into sinister propaganda, and nationalism into the red badges of international horror. War, once the synonym for a flaming idealism, has become with such bitter obviousness the brutal mechanical expression of vast political and economic forces which no glimmer of faith or idealism can control.

In disillusion with the practical scene, the mind of our generation has turned to the arts. There, too, it has found itself in a quagmire of uncertainties, skepticisms, and depressions. It has seen the life, grandeur, and exaltation once held to be the peculiar gift of art, denounced as false, romantic and absurd. It has read in the new school of biographers that all idols have clay feet. It has seen the art of literature degenerating into a study of clay feet. Our novels have turned from the soft sublimities of Tennysonian love to enshrining the root of lust; for Platonic rapture has been substituted protoplasmic thrills. The very absurdness of the comparison between James Joyce's and Tennyson's "Ulysses" accents the change. The towering images of physical passion have replaced

> For I sail beyond the sunset and the baths
> Of all the Western stars until I die.

In music, for the clear sonorities of the great tradition there are the broken rhythms, the wild cacophonies, the strained harmonies by which artists in sound have tried to utter the passionate disintegration of the modern

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spirit. In painting, for the serenities of classic composition we have the fevered, highly colored attempts to communicate, through a superficial formlessness, a deep sense of significant form.

Possibly no one, not an academic idiot, has failed to see the value of all these rebellions and disintegrations. The fixed musty world has been shaken up. Vivacity and a sense for change have become the dominant notes in our thinking and our life. We have come to hate, before all else, the formal and dead. We have moved into what James calls an open universe. If there is less security than in the tight world of tradition, there is more adventure; if there is less verbal nobility, there is much more intimacy and spontaneity. Above all we are living in a free world, freed of dogma in religion, of fixity in morals, of the academic in art and the formal in manners. Nobody wants to move back into the snug confines of the Victorian world again. We are free. But what price freedom?

There is a well known Russian story by Chekhov, I think, of a man whose wife had run away, whose finances were ruined, whose house had burned down, and who was, in consequence, explicably unhappy. It was the deep of winter. He took a sleigh and went driving off into the cold, with the sleigh bells merrily jingling. He was free to go where he pleased, and he did not know or consider where he was going.

I think this is the situation of the young minds of our time. They are beginning to feel lost and drifting in a world out of which, along with many shoddy old fixities and lies, they have seen many lovely myths and inspiring dreams destroyed. If they have been freed from the old arbitrary laws, they have found no new reassuring sanity or counsel. If they have exploded factitious idealisms, they have no new sound ones. If they no longer have galling commands to obey, they have no clean and urgent program to follow.

What they are hunting for in philosophy, if I mistake not, is something like a law, a law not in the sense of a command but of a guide to action. If the old order is gone irrevocably, they do not, therefore, relish chaos. What kind of order can they project for themselves on the basis of a frank and unhypocritical feeling of the world?

In the first place, if they listen to the voice of contemporary scientific thought, they will find that it is possible to have an idealism without unction or tears or false beliefs. Much of the paralysis of disillusion, so cuttingly expressed by Aldous Huxley in "Antic Hay", comes from those colors of chaos and meanness in which many contemporary writers have essayed to paint the truth about nature and life. Much of the cynicism is, as is usual in such cases, the outlet for a piqued and defeated idealism.

Suppose we accept the contributions of recent science as to the mechanical conditions and the animal basis of life. The miracle of the spirit that protoplasm generates and matter nourishes is not rendered any the less varied, singing or wonderful. To say that it is, would be like saying that the serene majesty of César Franck's D Minor Symphony is not there because the music is played by a hundred mediocre looking human animals, scraping strings, blowing wooden reeds, and beating skins. The contemporary mind, so recently habituated to looking matter and the natural world full in the face, has never been

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able to believe anything but vulgarity of matter. It has failed to remember or to observe what living and beautiful incarnations matter can take, and to what wingedness and music of the spirit it can rise. It has become a stock trick of artists in modern despair to paint a stark picture of the bleak mechanical world, where, "blind to good and evil, impotent matter rolls on its relentless way". But in that crass mechanism how lovely are the sunsets, and in these fated short cycles of birth and decay how much of deathless wonder and beauty comes to fulfilment. If man lives in slime — and there is slime always at the core of the soul — it is nevertheless this briefly animated dust that beholds stars, writes symphonies, and imagines God. The rebellious modern mind is very like those révoltés from the drabness of middle western towns, whose constant theme is bitterness and denunciation. We need, perhaps, most of all to become naturalized in the natural world. To describe or to face experience in terms only of its physical and animal machinery is no more complete or relevant than it would be to describe a charming dinner party by talking exclusively about the digestive processes of the guests.

The loss of a literal belief in an eternal personal God and a traditional salvation has its compensating side. We may come to appreciate with more freedom and completeness those reaches toward perfection which the great religions have with such infinite tenderness and poetry enshrined. We may substitute for a mumbled lip service toward a God who is merely a name and a household habit, a piety toward that cosmos which has generated so many gracious things, flowers and friends, our hunger for immortality, our myths of heaven, and our dreams of God.

We may thus become reconciled to the natural world, to the irreducible brutality of matter and the undeniably basic animality of life. We may even come to cherish them for the spirit which they generate and the beauties they subserve. It is possible, in the same spirit, to face moral problems, without being a fool, a sentimentalist, or a prig. Ethics has so long been associated with sourness and stultification, with curates, with old maids and college professors, that the free mind has fled from any discourse savoring of morals. It suggests too much of that unction and pharisaism of which the world has for ages been wrenching itself free.

The new paganism sees life, as the ancient paganism saw it, a bright interval between two endless deaths. It asks only to be let alone to crowd that pulsing interval with happiness. Why listen to the chilling voice of superstition calling itself duty when there is so little time in which to enjoy so much? But even the free man has found himself tormented by two conflicting impulses or through living with others whose interests collided with his own. In experience some choices are forced upon us, some rejections must be made. And it requires not the preaching of a moralist but the unmistakable nature of things to show us that absolute liberty is impossible. We may resent the false, outworn, and unnecessary repressions that parents and teachers have forced upon us. But some order or organization of life is indispensable if we are to live at all or to live at all happily. Absolute liberty would be absolute insanity. It is found chiefly in asylums, where hysterical patients afford the most striking example of people who

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have let themselves go. It is ours to find the most fruitful and generous forms of life. We must make for ourselves a discipline, not one that is suggested to us by a cruel or a fanatical moralist but one arising out of the inescapable conditions of nature and of life.

The problems of morals do not cease because we have thrown overboard the old pretended solutions that did not solve. Precisely because the new generation has been freed from much killing cant and narrowness and superstition, its mind is clear and direct. It could do much to clarify the human scene, and give sweeter and fairer perspectives to the common life. All that is required is patience, inquiry, and good will. There is little time to waste in hitting at past errors, considering the vastness and variety of the business in hand. If our current practices, our industry, our commerce, our education are primitive and cruel, they might be civilized and humanized by those same alert intelligences that now satirize or turn their backs on them altogether. If psychoanalysis has taught us more than we ever knew or dared to acknowledge about the dark and sinister corners of our hearts, so much the more information have we toward the cleansing of our spirits and the ordering of our lives. If we know till it hurts what is wrong with the American scene, its standardizations, rush, brutality, and dulness, it is ours, as God says to Peter in H. G. Wells's "Joan and Peter", to change them.

The latter day pagan knows more or less what he misses in the current turmoil and chaos. The word "beauty", used for so many different festivals of the spirit, perhaps best describes that vividness and clarity which the contemporary marketplace does not reveal. So the pagan flees, as of old, to the ivory tower. He finds there, too often, simply a morose photography of the chaos from which he has fled, or a thin æsthetic tickling of the palate provided for him by such men as Huxley and Van Vechten, artists in phosphorescent decay. The arts used to be shores of eternity upon which we might rest from our voyages in the restless deeps of time. Too largely now they have become satirical reporting, as in Sinclair Lewis, or sickly exquisiteness and meaningless embroidery, like the poetry in the little reviews. The young disillusionists need a new St. Thomas to write them a new Summa Theologia. All the parts of human experience in the grand mediæval synthesis fitted snugly into that universe whose comforting principle was a living God. The painter painted, the builder builded, even the juggler, as in the famous legend of the juggler monk, juggled for the glory of God, or of the Virgin. Can we hope for a reconstructive faith, rising out of the picture of the world that science and sophistication reveal for our belief? I believe we can.

Such men as William James, Dewey, Santayana, have made the outlines of that picture for our generation. Nature and life are at bottom, if you will, meaningless, blind and chaotic. But they are malleable to an intelligence that faces them with candor and courage. Out of this miscellaneous soil of things, something like a garden may be made. But weeds must be removed; growths must be tended. And we must know how to distinguish between flowers and weeds.

Every artist and every athlete knows how stern a regimen is imposed by an ideal. A harmony among other things means the exclusion of

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irrelevant noises. No tautness or swiftness is possible in the body without some denial of appetite or indulgent caprice. If we wish to make of our lives a clear and fluent music there is much that we must gird ourselves to, and much that we shall have to renounce.

"A marble temple shining on a hill." That has been a favorite image of the sunlit pagan world. What shall be the image of our newer paganism? Music, perhaps, for our life and habits are in our day so caught in the flux of time. If the themes of our life are to flow with gathering clarity and splendor, we shall look to our instruments and to our playing. One wild note will stop or cloud the music; we must be disciplined craftsmen if our lives are to sound that harmony of which we dream. Our hands must be steady, and our senses sure, our action intelligent and our vision direct. We shall then seek a religion that utters our loyalty to the things of the spirit, a morality that is a program toward a harmony of life, an art that is a clear picture of those eternities for which men can clearly continue to care.

## A SAILOR GREETS THE SEA

By Robert Roe

COME up, empty horizons!
Come up, barren purple skylines —
Wavered a little, definite purple.
Come up, blue days, blue sea days
And pale blue islands like smoke cones.
Come up, wind bags and steamers
Crawling like black bugs on blue silk.

Come up, horizons, crowded or bare,
Lonely grey Atlantic or busy Caribbean.
Today, tomorrow, when you are peopled
I will tell islands and ships.
When empty
I will count my thoughts.

Come up, long horizons,
Opening one after another
Flawless, perfect,
Like opening flowers,
Slow blowing blooms.

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# THE ONE GOLD COIN

## By Michael Arlen

*With Sketches by Dwight Taylor*

II

A CLOCK somewhere was striking seven o'clock as Captain Spain rang the bell of the house in Bedford Square. It was cold and dark, and it rained bitterly. All the houses in Bedford Square look very much alike, and Mr. Berridge's looked very much like Mr. Asquith's, which was almost next door. That, thought Basil Spain, was not right, was not fitting, for, while reserving his opinion of Mrs. Asquith, he had a great respect for her gentle and scholarly husband, and was touched with melancholy to see him in such company. Meanwhile, he rang the bell again. Bedford Square was still with that slightly contemptuous stillness of a Bloomsbury square, but from the traffic on the Tottenham Court Road came a monstrous din, a fanfare of hurry and movement which, even in the rain, thrilled the mind of our young novelist, for he loved the bustle and significance of the town; nor was it without interest for him to distinguish, from the middle distance, the sharp cries of the taxis from the trumpetings of the buses, the growls of those who drive horse vehicles from the sombre, grief stricken bass that is the warning note of fashionable cars. Meanwhile, he rang the bell again.

"Got an appointment?" asked a sudden voice at the door.

"Certainly", said Captain Spain.

"Hm", said the man, eyeing him. He was a large, slovenly looking man. Basil, under that eyeing, achieved the most difficult feat in the world, which is to look as though one has an appointment when one has not an appointment. Many men, but for the lack of that gift, would not now be in the workhouse; and how many charwomen would not now be footlight favorites, if only they had possessed that puissant art! Whereas Captain Spain, in the days of his poverty, had managed to see every editor in London. This must not be held against him by the gentle and simple. Deference, to be sure, is becoming to youth; but add to it a dash of daring (the same that is called "cheek" by the envious), and what a brew for success is there!

"Come in", said the man.

"Such was my intention", said our hero warmly. "And I've got very little time, tell Mr. Berridge. My name is Carruthers, from Messrs. Hips and Haws, the publishers."

"Well, keep your 'air on", said the slovenly man. "And wait, will you."

Basil Spain was not, however, a good waiter. No sooner had the slovenly man turned his back when our hero tiptoed after it. The slovenly man opened a door and disappeared within. Captain Spain also disappeared, but only within the shadows of the door on the side opposite to that which led to the front hall: wherefore, when the



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slovenly man came out of the room and turned toward the hall to send Mr. Carruthers about his business . . .

"Hel*lo!*" said the man Berridge from his writing table. "I have just told my man to send you to the devil."

"I've come to him on my own", said Basil brightly. "The joke may be obvious, but it will serve. A word with you, Nathaniel Berridge."

It was a handsome, luxurious room. Mr. Berridge was a handsome, elderly man, who became his room to a singular degree.

"I must say", said Captain Spain, "that I am agreeably surprised at your appearance, which is, on the surface, that of a gentleman."

"Talking of surfaces", said Mr. Berridge, "you are qualifying, my good young man, for the blackest black eye out of Central Africa."

Our hero smiled loftily, but within him there was not the counterpart of a lofty smile, nor even of a smile of lowly degree. Far, indeed, from being "agreeably surprised" at his antagonist's appearance, it had come to him as an unpleasant shock. Mr. Berridge was so little as he should have been. Mr. Berridge should have been stout and common: he should have been viciously hearty, and he should have had an uneasy eye: at least, he should have been, if not a Jew, greasy, after the manner of blackmailers. It was not just nor reasonable that he should be a quiet man, and sinewy thin: nor had he any manner of right to own a lean grey face, symmetrical and ascetic, and dangerously mocking eyes under crisp grey hair. Mr. Berridge had, in fact, that quiet and deadly unpleasantness which, it is our grief to record, is one of the patent signs of a public school and university education.

Mr. Berridge relit his cigar. Captain Spain sat down.

"I have come, sir," said he, "on a somewhat delicate matter."

"How different, then, will be the manner of your departure!" softly said Mr. Berridge, and his cold grey eyes teased Basil dangerously. "And, my good young man, who the deuce may you be, anyway? There's no such firm of publishers as Hips and Haws."

"I thought as much", said Basil sternly. "I have come, sir, to acquire from you the letters of the Duchess of Galt."

"And you may go, sir," said Mr. Berridge, "to hell; or back to the Duchess of Galt, as the case may be."

"You refuse, then?"

Mr. Berridge laughed quietly.

"What a pipsqueak it is!" Nor was his manner less insulting than his words. "Of course I refuse."

Before Basil had made up his mind what to say next, the large, slovenly man came in. He looked at Basil wickedly, and Basil jumped up, clutching his stick. He was going to fight.

"Bring sherry", said Mr. Berridge to the servant: and to Basil, "You'd like a glass?"

"Oh! thank you", said he, with some relief.

"You'll need it, my good young man, to fortify you against the chill air into which I shall shortly have you ejected. But I do not mind a few minutes' conversation with you beforehand. You are at least candid. What, as you are my guest, is your name?"

"Spain."

"Well, it serves you right. And you are on this errand as the cavalier of her Grace of Galt? Well, that serves her right."

Basil thoughtfully sipped his sherry. It was very good sherry.

"I drink your sherry, Mr. Berridge," said he, "only on the distinct understanding that I would rather be

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ramming it down your throat with a sixteen inch gun in such a way that your already misshapen and probably septic teeth must follow it. *A votre santé!*"

"Tell me", said Mr. Berridge, "are you in love with the Duchess? Or rather, is she in love with you, for she has reached the time of life when a young man does not come amiss to a, shall we say, temperamental woman? But, as you have doubtless discovered, a woman after a certain age must automatically become a Christian Scientist: she only thinks she is attractive."

"My God!" whispered Captain Spain. "He won't even let me drink his sherry!" And, with a deft twist of his fingers, he threw the contents of his glass over Mr. Berridge's mocking face. "That will teach you", he whispered, "to insult a very good and noble lady."

"And, may God blast you, this will teach you to waste my sherry", snarled Mr. Berridge, and Basil, before he could properly rise from his chair, felt the impact of a fist like an iron weight on his chin. He rose from the floor unsteadily, but the sight of Mr. Berridge wiping his face and trying to sponge his collar made him laugh.

"Anyway," he said, "though it is probably many years since anyone has asked you out to dinner, you will certainly have to change tonight. Now, Mr. Berridge," he went on, feeling his chin, which was very painful, "be reasonable. Why on earth won't you hand over those letters? You have been offered two hundred for them, remember. You can't possibly make more than that by their publication, can you? They are of no value except as the innocent love letters of a young girl—"

Mr. Berridge, who seemed by now to have arranged his face to his satisfaction, laughed that quiet laugh of his. It would have been an attractive laugh, but for the remarks it prefaced. He would have been an attractive man, but for the verdigris in his heart.

"Girl!" he mocked. "She's told you about them, has she?"

Basil nodded; and there was a sudden queer light in his eyes, for he suddenly reheard the voice of the Duchess of Galt, and it was saying: "It is such an ancient tale, Basil, that you would not dare to write it unless you could think of a queer twist to put at the end of it."

"Well, I've read them", Mr. Berridge was saying. "They're in there." And he nodded to some shelves behind him, packed with small shining boxes, each initialed. Basil's eyes fixed thoughtfully on the box labeled M. G., but he was thinking of the Duchess's words. Now how would he end such an ancient tale, what queer twist would he put on it? He, Basil Spain, had a reputation for cynicism to keep up, a cynicism that put ironic ends to ancient tales. . . .

"Girl!" mocked Mr. Berridge, and his voice was cold as ice. "My good young man, these creatures of fashion were never girls. Hearts like flints, and eyes like stars — beautiful as heaven, and corrupt as hell! No, no, my good young man, they were never girls — they were born *allumeuses* of ambitious hearts — and I pray to God, my good young man, that they will die by the fires of revolution!"

The man was a fanatic, an anarchist. Behind the quiet, cold, mocking eyes there was a harsh, brittle light. Basil looked at him queerly. The germ of that terrible idea persisted, and Basil was shocked in the roots of his mind. It was such a terrible idea that, had he had a revolver, he would have

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shot Mr. Berridge as he sat, and with the greatest pleasure he would have watched him writhing in his death agonies.

"And so," he said thoughtfully, "like the worm you are, you have read the letters?"

"Several times", said Mr. Berridge. "The young *allumeuse!*"

Now let credit be given where credit is due. Our hero's voice was admirably controlled to reflect only the curiosity of the moment.

"But why, Mr. Berridge," he asked gravely, "do you hate the Duchess so bitterly?"

"All, all!" smiled Mr. Berridge, if that mocking contraction of his tight, thin lips may be called a smile. "I hate them all, my good young man. The maggots that they are — the useless, heartless maggots! What use are they, your fine folk, tell me that? No longer even are they, like their ancestors, patrons of art. Imagine it, they encourage de Laszlo to make anæmic chocolate box covers of them all. And it is left to rich plebeians and Americans to encourage a master artist like Augustus John. Bah, the peasant minded aristocrats of our day! And isn't it written in the papers, with a fine smirk, that a Prince of the Blood has been a dozen times to a certain revue? A pretty example, my good young man. Has he, do you think, also been twelve times to the Opera? And did he go at all to Shaw's wonderful play, 'Heartbreak House', which was allowed to run only a few weeks? For you will scarcely deny, my good young man, that it is the duty of princes and patricians to direct the tastes and encourage the artistic conscience of the people. But what is discovered to be the case? So little appreciation of fineness have they that they cannot even support an Opera — nay, cannot even arouse the interest for an Opera in the minds of their inferiors! They go, instead, twelve times to a revue, may God pardon them! I tell you, my good young man, that for aristocrats as such I have no objection: but when, as in our day, their minds are peasants' minds and their tastes are peasants' tastes, then I take the liberty to point out to you", said Mr. Berridge sternly, "as a reasonable if inferior faced young man, that there is no room in the world for their vulgar rowdyism, their complacent adulteresses and stiffnecked cads, their drunkenness at night clubs and their preenings at ghastly Galas. The bastinado shall come as a preface to the guillotine, the bastinado! I am far from denying, however, that I do not disapprove of the Duchess of Galt more than of the others."

"Because, I suppose, she had you kicked off a committee?"

"Perhaps that is why. But perhaps, my good young man, I have another reason."

And Basil Spain, with the queer strained light of his terrible idea in his eyes, and his face white as death, leaned forward to the mocking face.

"What?" he whispered.

"The letters themselves!" said Mr. Berridge harshly, but always he smiled: and with a slam he brought his palm down on his table, so that the papers thereon fluttered peevishly. "The letters themselves, I tell you! Unlike you, my good young man, I may not be one among the captains of chivalry; but I have my feelings. These letters, as you may know, are addressed to a young engineer; and I gather that he was an ambitious and earnest young man, intent only to succeed. My good young man, that engineer was as vastly different from you as I am. I can make out the whole

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pitiful story from these 'innocent' and 'girlish' letters. He was ambitious, I tell you, he had guts, and will to succeed. But with this will", said Mr. Berridge with feeling, "went such a power to love, to *love*, I say, as would have instantly destroyed a lesser man; and who will say that in the end it did not destroy even him? He met this young *allumeuse* at Welvoir; she, with the arts and graces of her loveliness, with those fine candors and sweet discontents whose perfect expression is given only to people of breeding, made him fall in love with her; and when, because of the fire in the man, his heart was breaking with desire to possess her, for Monica Galt walked in beauty like the night, she sent him away with girl talk about fidelity to her husband: who cared for her, so I've heard, as little as she deserved. Now couldn't she, my good young man, have remembered her fidelity to her husband earlier? Need she, my precious young cavalier, have so pitilessly won the homage of that proud young man's mind and heart — only, may God punish her, to tell the boy that she was not for him! Bah, the crimes of some women! The only thing they can do that man cannot do is to bear children — and, my God!" cried Mr. Berridge with indignation, "how they have traded on that one trick! And in return they expect — chivalry! The letters, I tell you, make the whole story plain to me. At last the young man had to go away, to get on with the job: to work, to forget, to succeed. But did she leave him alone? Did she hell, my good young man! Weekly, almost daily, she sent him these puling letters — "

"That will do!" hissed Captain Spain. "Or finish your sherry quickly."

"These puling letters, my good young man, so that the young engineer had little chance to forget her devilish beauty. Women like that, I tell you, will coil round the roots of a man's mind, they will encompass him with dreams of their ultimate surrender, they will haunt him with the carmine shadows of their potential lust, they will destroy him damnably. And so, with the burden of this desire on his heart, I wonder if our young engineer succeeded in his ambitions. I wonder . . . Bah! But I tell you plainly, Mr. Spain," continued the mocking voice terribly, "that, had I no other reason to detest the *ci-devant châtelaine* of Welvoir, I would be her bitter enemy on the count of these letters alone. Her Grace of Galt shall be punished, Mr. Spain, if only through her sentimental memories. I may add, between ourselves alone, that I shall not be talking any more this evening. Good night."

Very near to Mr. Berridge's did Basil Spain move his face.

"My God!" he whispered. "My God! Oh, to kill you, just to kill you!"

And, with the last livid memory of the cold, mocking eyes of the lean man at his writing table, Basil found himself outside in the dim narrow passage way. There he stood very still for a moment, breathing deeply, as though to clear from his lungs the foul air of a pesthouse.

"The young knight!" he thought. "Dear Heaven, the young knight of the crumbling wall!"

In the hall the slovenly looking man stared at him wickedly, but Basil did not glance at him, did not mend his pace: his face set with loathing at the irony that had come to pass, for was there ever a beastlier irony than the transmutation of the knight of the crumbling grey wall into the black hearted, foul lipped master of mem-

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oirs? My God, if she should ever know! She must never know, but never! Oh, to squash that man! Just to put a foot down and squash him, if only to prove to God that all men are not made in His image, but that some, when crushed, crack like beetles. . . .

"Get a move on, you!" snarled the slovenly man, but was answered only by the slam of the door. Just without, in the relentless rain, Basil stood, immersed in thought, wondering how on earth he could get those letters. Force was necessary, obviously; but whence the force? For he, though ordinarily muscular, was not strong enough to cope with one of those hefty men, never mind both. Force, force. For get those letters he must; there was less question than ever about that, now that his loathing for the Berridge man was added to his love for the Duchess. "The young knight of the crumbling grey wall!" Dear Heaven! And sourly Basil smiled to himself. For ever and again there came before his eyes an unwritten tale by one Basil Spain, telling how a noble lady had once set a young man to the quest of some letters, and how the blackguard who possessed them had turned out to be the proud young lover of so long ago. Yes, given the data of the letters, that is verily how Basil Spain would have written that tale, for it is with the cream of a rotten jest that modern youth will point its tales. And now Basil Spain, having found life as one of his tales might be, was shocked to the depths of his mind. . . .

So immersed was he in such wretched thoughts, and in wondering how he was ever to get those letters, that he failed to consider the rain sodden step from the doorway to the pavement; and for the second time that evening he fell his length, but now onto the slime of the pavement; and, thus falling, he completely lost his temper.

"Taxi, sir?" cried a hoarse, genial voice; and Basil, looking up from the screwed up position in which he was vainly trying to order his extremities, saw that a taxi had drawn up on the curb. He grunted.

"Haw, haw!" chuckled the taxi driver, a throaty man. "Did the little man fall, or was he knocked down by a bouquet of gardenias?"

You know, it really was not fair on Basil. The experiences of the evening had been manifold, and very unpleasant: his temper was frayed, his nerves on edge. The levity was most misplaced.

"You silly ass!" he yelled frantically at the taxi driver. "What the blazes you laughing at?"

And he advanced upon the taxi driver, and the taxi driver emerged from his seat as might a mountain out of a box.

"If you want to know," said he, "I'll learn you. You bit of a geranium!"

Now Basil was a quick thinking youth, even when he had lost his temper. The taxi driver was a huge man, and, swathed in the overcoats, cloths, and mufflers that taxi drivers seem to enwrap about them for the purpose of not finding small change for a ten shilling note, he looked colossal.

"Look here," said Basil sharply, "I've got an idea."

"Well, it'll probably be your last", said the taxi driver, but quite genially. "Did you tell me to shut up? Now what about a nice thick ear?"

And he bent his face down toward Basil's, so that Basil could not help a smile, for it was a comical face, huge and round and red, with a small nose

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tuck like a bit of colored putty in the niddle of the fleshy expanse, and omewhere above the nose two bright winkling eyes.

"Look here," said Basil, "don't be ı silly ass all your life, but come and ıave a drink instead. You'll also nake a fiver if you're good."

"Right, sir", said the taxi driver. 'Sorry I laughed at you, sir. I'm told here's a new American bar open at Claridge's. Or what about splitting a ıice glass of cold water at Eustace Miles's?"

"I only hope you can fight better han you can joke", sighed Basil. 'Isn't there a pub at the corner here?"

"The boy's a sport!. Yuss, there's he Ram's Head a few yards up. Jump on the board, sir. I won't put he flag down on you just this once."

"Are you strong?" asked Basil, as ıe held on to the footboard while the axi bumped the few yards to the ights of the public house at the corner of Tottenham Court Road.

"Strong!" chuckled the driver hroatily, and as he chuckled the taxi eemed almost to shake to pieces. 'Ask Joe Beckett! Ask Jack Dempey! And you'll probably never live o ask another question. Strong!" And the taxi driver moved his vast ace to one side with that genial look of contempt which, among the lower ort, commonly prefaces a liquid jaculation. This, however, did not naterialize; and our hero and the fat axi driver entered the Saloon Bar of he public house, where, with mutual expressions of good will, they had one.

III

"It's like this", began Captain Spain. "A man in this square has got old of some letters that — "

"This is on me", said the taxi driver. "Joe, two more. Go on, sir. Phew, it's hot!" And, puffing and panting, he loosened some of his outer coverings, while Basil stared as though fascinated at the roll upon roll of flesh that fell from the man's chin and throat over his collar.

"I say, how *did* you get like that?" he simply couldn't resist asking.

"Beer", said the taxi driver thoughtfully. "Beer. It is a disease, though, that's what it is. No man alive, sir, could drink as much beer as I look as though I'd drunk. It's not human. Lord, I was as natty as you once, I give you my word. Joe, you fathead, did you hear me? 'Two more' was what I said. Now, Captain, what's this you want me to do?"

"I want you", said Basil, "(a) to help me in a little bit of house breaking; (b) to bash a man over the head in such a manner that, should his mother call on him tomorrow and find him at home, she would at once rush to Scotland Yard to deplore the impersonation of her son by a monstrous stranger; and (c) to retrieve some letters from this same man, which came into his possession thus and thus, and to which he has no manner of right. Joe, two more."

Then Basil Spain more fully explained his lady's dilemma to the fat taxi driver, whose thirst was not deeper than his sympathy, for every now and then he would growl throatily at the misconducts of Mr. Berridge. Basil did not, of course, give the name of the lady, nor more than the bare outlines of her faded romance, but he was practised in the presenting to rougher natures of ladies of charm, and soon, on behalf of his lady, he had worked the taxi driver up to such a pitch of indignation that he scarcely heeded the offer of ten pounds with which Basil sought to clinch the matter; and when he had further explained

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that they ran no risk of coming into collision with the police, for Mr. Berridge could not dare to bring to any court of law so low a grievance, it was only with the quick application of "two more" that he could hold the taxi driver from dealing with the situation there and then.

"To the ladies!" was their last toast, and very heartily they drank the same; and, as they made to leave the Ram's Head, there arose such a conspiracy of politeness between them as to who should first pass out from the door that the patrons of the place felt justified in thinking they had begun a dance, and cheered accordingly. This provoked the genial taxi driver, and remarks were exchanged, which could not but result in two more. Then, concerting their plan of action, they drove to the door of the evil hearted house: where, forming fours in such a manner as would screen Captain Spain behind the huge bulk of the taxi driver, the latter pressed the bell.

"And wot d'you want?" asked the slovenly man.

"That's good!" chuckled the taxi driver. "And I suppose you didn't just ring up the Museum Rank for a cab to go to St. Pancras?"

"You're balmy, that's wot", said the slovenly man.

"Now!" snapped Captain Spain, and instantly the slovenly man fell down within the doorway, and where he fell he lay, for the taxi driver had, so he said, planted him one in the solar plexus.

Quietly they closed the door against the street; and deftly bound up the man, Basil's handkerchief around his ankles and the taxi driver's around his mouth; for, Basil's being the more precious, the taxi driver courteously pointed out, it would come to less harm round the man's ankle than in any more exposed places on his deplorable person.

"Quietly!" whispered Basil. "Quietly!" And then, the taxi driver like an impersonal mountain behind him he flung open the door of Mr. Berridge's room. Dramatic was the entrance; it was not less dramatically welcomed. Up jumped Mr. Berridge with an outraged snarl. Basil showed him only a very white profile but pointed toward him with his stick.

"Just squash that man, will you!" said he to his myrmidon.

"Certainly, Captain", said the taxi driver.

"You pipsqueak!" stammered the man Berridge, beside himself. "You pipsqueak! Get out of here, both of you!"

"Ho!" said the taxi driver. "And what's all this?"

And the mountain advanced upon Mr. Berridge, who, quivering with impotent rage, looked verily like a scorpion. And the mountain advanced upon Mr. Berridge, who suddenly made a Texas gesture. . . .

"Look out!" cried Basil sharply, and hurled his stick at Berridge's head, but the revolver in Berridge's hand had time to spit once at the mountain.

"What!" bellowed the taxi driver "You would!" And Basil Spain can hear until this day the fleshy crash of the great fist against the lean jaw of the man who called himself Berridge and the clatter of the falling revolver against the fender, and the unmentionable words that came like maddened wasps from Berridge's bleeding lips as, his arms beating spider-like in the air, he fell beneath the great swings of the enraged taxi driver.

"Phew, it's hot!" panted that fat man. "Got the letters, Captain?"

"Keep an eye on him!" cried Basil

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DRAMATIC WAS THE ENTRANCE; IT WAS NOT LESS DRAMATICALLY WELCOMED.



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and, dashing toward the shelves on which were packed the small steel boxes, snatched the one labeled M. G.

"You beast, you beast!" sobbed the man Berridge, suddenly jumping up and leaping toward him.

"Now then!" grunted the taxi driver, and smote him to the floor so that he could not care to rise again.

"Did he get you with his gun?" whispered Basil, but why he whispered he did not know.

"Did he get me!" grunted the taxi driver contemptuously. "Him! Why, supposing he was a Turk he couldn't even massacre an Armenian, he couldn't!"

The screwed up figure on the floor stirred, and said an unmentionable word, and stirred again. Basil Spain, the small steel box under his arm, looked down at him thoughtfully.

"Mr. Berridge," he said, "or whatever your real name is, it isn't so much because of the way you were going to use these letters that I hate you, as because you could be so disloyal to a lady who once honored you with her notice. May God pardon you, for no one else ever will."

"Come on, Captain", said the taxi driver, from just without the door. "We can put it to music later."

"My good young man, I don't even know the wom— " venomously began the figure on the floor, but his only audience was the crash of the hall door.

IV

"Her Grace is at dinner, sir."

"I wish I was, Robins. At what part of dinner?"

"The dessert is just about to be sent up, sir."

"Tell her Grace, Robins, that I bring her a confection of her own making that she will find far sweeter than any ever made by Gunter or Rumpelmeyer."

Then, in due course, said Robins:

"Captain Spain, your Grace."

"Basil!" came the small, slightly husky voice. "*Basil!*"

Then Captain Spain, fumbling with the steel casket in his hands, briefly said thus and thus: and further, very shyly: "Don't thank me, please, for I had marvelous help. Now I must not interrupt your dinner. . . ."

For, beside the divan on which she lay, was a low table, and on the table a tray. . . .

But she, the lady of manners more ancient even than her memories, must rise to take the precious box from his hand. And her eyes, intently tender were dim with the tears she would be shedding in a minute or two.

"The young knight of the crumbling grey wall could have done no more" she whispered. "Basil, dear Basil, how shall I ever thank you! My sons will thank you, too. For they died to preserve the gold of the world — and you Basil, have lived to preserve the only gold coin I ever had in my life."

"Please!" he begged, for, very deeply feeling his unworth, he was so shy that he did not know which way to look. And he said quickly: "By the way, Duchess, before I forget, would you instruct your lawyers to send fifty pounds to the man who helped me? He is a taxi driver, and though I promised him only ten I think he really deserves fifty of the two hundred which the man Berridge refused. Here is his name and address."

And the Duchess, just glancing at the slip of paper he gave her, sighed tremulously: "This curious, sentimental evening, Basil! For here is comic coincidence, that the name of your taxi driver, George Hurst, was the name of the young knight of the crumbling

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grey wall. Of course there are thousands of George Hursts, but it makes it all the more fitting that he should have helped you, doesn't it?"

"Well, I suppose it does", Basil agreed, smiling, and then — for, to tell the truth, he was rather anxious for his dinner — making over the Duchess's hand that abrupt downward gesture that takes the place of the kiss of courtesy with an Englishman, and muttering something about being glad to have been some use, he left the Duchess to her dessert.

Outside in Curzon Street there was one taxi on the rank; beside it, not to Basil's surprise, bent the massive figure over his lamps.

"Good night, George Hurst. And thank you", he cried from the pavement.

"That's all right, Captain", the fat face smiled genially. "Glad to be of use to any lady. Always was, worse luck, else I wouldn't be where I am now. Ho, I was once as slim and ambitious as you, I give you my word."

Then Basil Spain laughed a great laugh, so that a policeman came out of a side street and stared at him.

"Did you ever read Heine, George Hurst?"

"O Lord, I forget. Where's he come in?"

"He merely said, George Hurst, that there is an Aristophanes in heaven."

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# FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT— "ROMANTIC LADY"

## By Hamilton Williamson

A GIRL of ten — fair, blue eyed and English — sat crouched before her little sister, gazing into the face of the younger child. Her breath came in dramatic gasps and she wove a blood curdling tale. Frances Eliza Hodgson was playing on the heart strings of her first public.

The little sister, Edith, fought down her terror and held back big sobs, the better to listen. But when the story was over she kicked and screamed and Frances knew her tale was a thing of power.

The passenger steamers of sixty years ago were pretty terrible things, but life in Manchester, England, had become impossible for the Hodgson brood. The father was dead, the money all gone, and so, when Frances was fourteen years old the family steamed away for Knoxville, Tennessee, where Uncle William had gone and set up a store in which almost anything might be bought. The voyage took fourteen days, even though the landing was at Quebec. There were no steamer chairs; the passengers sat about uncertainly on stools. Storms raged, the course was beset with icebergs, and the food was unspeakable.

On one of the fairly calm days the little girls, peeping at the steerage passengers, saw a black haired lass lying limp on a coil of rope. They heard her murmur: "If Mary Anne had 'a' knowed this you wouldn't 'a' kotched her here." But you would have "kotched" Frances there. She wouldn't have missed it for worlds Sea, winds, and rain were power for her story telling battery.

Tennessee meant growing things space, new people, marvels! Frances Eliza began to write. She read the stories aloud to her sister, eyeing her in the pauses. The stories held! Edith was spellbound.

Then came the picking of wild grapes for money to buy stamps to send those stories away. They sold to "Godey's Ladies' Book". Their successors have been selling for sixty years And during all that time the method of their writing hasn't changed materially

As we were once sitting together in her marvelous garden on Long Island Mrs. Burnett told me, in the course of a discursive talk, how the ideas for her stories came.

"At first", she said, "it's like a little bird, singing, far, far away. I sit still, very still, waiting, listening It flies nearer and nearer. At last it perches on my shoulder, and I know I can write the story."

She must have understood perfectly all the modern theories about the subconscious — she was an omnivorous reader — but never did I hear her use the term, and, somehow, I was shy of it myself. I felt that the theory of the mind in strata must be repellent to her Yet a large part of her life had been spent working in that subconscious gathering up stored treasures.



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After writing one of the "Romantic Lady" stories at one sitting she said to her sister: "Something *outside* of me does it. It all comes so easily that I almost feel like a criminal. I've *got* to do something for somebody." And she drew a check to Edith.

"A strange faraway look in her eyes, like someone that wasn't there." That is her sister's description of her as she wrote. Sometimes she would get down on her knees before a low table and cover page after page of lined foolscap, piling them on the floor. And it was her first draft that went to the typist, practically without a correction.

It was difficult for her to edit her own work, so completely was it the product of what Mary Austin might call her deep-self. And she confessed — I almost said professed — a profound ignorance of punctuation. To her mind it didn't seem to matter much in getting the story over to her public — a listening Edith multiplied by thousands.

But what did matter was detail: furniture, carpets, gowns, hats, and every living thing in a garden. She piled them up and up, like evidence in a courtroom. It's always as if she said: "What I am telling you is *true*. You must believe it because all these things were part of their attendant circumstances." And one was swept away and believed — was polite and didn't probe and poke about, because it was romance. Always romance in a Belasco setting worked out to the nth degree. The magic of detail. Storm clouds gathered, they broke — sunshine. And life was a neat, complete thing.

Above all, life was well rounded. So it came as a terrific shock to Mrs. Burnett when Mr. Stokes proposed that the oneness of her last book be violated, that out of "The Head of the House of Coombe" two books be made.

She wrote me a long letter about this from Plandome, Long Island. It began: "I was profoundly disturbed and unhappy yesterday. Mr. Stokes came to see me on Wednesday, and with the greatest gentleness and amiability and courtesy presented to me so many clear reasons why the story of Coombe should be made into two books that, to my horror, there seemed no other recourse."

When she had repeated the reasons he set forth she wrote: "He is wholly convinced that my second volume will only be waited for pantingly and rushed at by the public the moment it falls from the press."

Very flatly she stated: "I don't believe it." But, half retracting, asked: "What am I but a person who has written a book which she fancies is a complete thing and would be incomplete and deformed if cut in half and presented to the world in two cubes?" She added — and I think her lips must have twisted as she did so: "Before one's uncertainties loom all publishing commercial detail and booksellers who pant and cry out for halves of things."

She gave her full consent at last and ultimately admitted that Mr. Stokes was perfectly right. "The Head of the House of Coombe" was presented to her enormous audience, a story less complete than a fairy tale. Something left her hands which was not buttoned and tied. It was as painful to her as wakening a friend in the middle of a pleasant dream.

Before the vast manuscript went to her publishers she had loaned it, complete, to several people. What she loved to hear was that they had sat up reading on, on through the night, to the final curtain, then dropped to sleep,

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content. And that is exactly what they did do.

The getting of life into books was never a thing over which Mrs. Burnett agonized. But she set herself the heartbreaking task of putting the romance of her books into her own life. She was a woman of powerful will, and over and over she went at that. A steady stream of money poured in. It had, phenomenally, from the first. It was the product of her dreaming. It could buy the trappings of dreamland. She *must* make dreams come true.

She put her boys into velvet and lace and taught them beautiful manners. She arranged charming rooms, wore soft and lovely fabrics, planted gardens — gardens in America, gardens in England, a garden in Bermuda. In Bermuda she had to have the solid coral blasted out and earth brought, for roots.

From this garden she wrote me:

> It is like awakening in heaven. We landed on a blue Bermuda day. A cohort of angels met us, as they always do when we come, and we and our twenty two trunks and cases were wafted through the custom house and to the carriages which brought us home. Other angels had opened our house and adorned it with flowers and prepared an excellent dinner for us, and stood upon the white coral verandah waiting to welcome us. It is always so sweet to come home here. Will you let your thoughts dwell upon a sort of fairy story of coming to Bermuda?

Beauty, romance, imagination — they possessed her all three, but reality shook her cruelly.

Her first marriage to Dr. Burnett went on the rocks. I never heard her refer to this but once, when she said: "He was lame. That was enough for me."

Helping the lame. There is story book stuff.

At fifty one she married a man much younger than herself. Among her friends there was a sort of conspiracy o silence concerning this marriage, as i it were a thing too dreadful to b spoken of, even though the bald fact happened to be set forth in the encyclo pædia *and* the dictionary.

And all the while, what she did wa just what a dreamer of dreams would dc and there was a rightness and beaut about it, too. Only, perhaps, this wa the wrong kind of world in which to do it

She had gone back to England in sort of golden cloud of glory, and ha rented the main house in a great estat in Kent. Matham Hall they called it There were sixty acres in the grounds and thirteen of these acres were bloom ing gardens. It was only five hour from London. Lord Ronald Gowe son of a lady in waiting to Quee Victoria, was a frequent house guest and Lord and Lady Maitland, th Hepworth-Dicksons, and little Lad Cromatie.

It was all very wonderful, an Stephen Townsend adored it.

He was an Englishman with infinit charm of maner and a beautifu speaking voice. His uncle was forcin him to be a doctor and he hated clinic and hospitals. He wanted to be a actor, and he wanted to write.

That was it. He *wanted* somethin — something rather fine.

They worked together in her ros garden on the dramatization of he books. It was he who played the ea in "Little Lord Fauntleroy".

Her beloved son Lionel fell ill. Fc many months Stephen Townsend wa all tenderness and devotion to Lione Lionel adored him — and Lionel died

Later, there was an accident. Mr Burnett was driving from Mathar Hall, to meet Stephen Townsend at th station. The horse shied; she wa thrown out. Her head was cut and sh lay unconscious for five days, D

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Townsend in attendance. She was ill or months. He watched over her.

When he implored her to marry him, what could she do? If it had been in ier to throw romance and the happy nding out of the window she would not iave been Frances Hodgson Burnett. She married him and lived at Matham Hall as Mrs. Townsend. But soon, very soon, he became the pig in clover. He was a man who had a way with vomen and he probably misunderstood he situation absolutely — probably hought it was *he* who was holding her vhen, really, it was her own imagination. This was clothing him in qualities he never possessed, and herself in he softness of youth. She left him, eturned to America and the name she iad made. Eventually drink, which hattered him, caused his death.

Always in real life Mrs. Burnett ried to bring about the happy ending n big things and little, even when it was lesperately hard for her to play up.

I witnessed one of the little ones that urned out as a realist would have had t. The picture Mary Pickford had nade of "Little Lord Fauntleroy" was o be released. It was to have its irst showing at the Criterion Theatre. All over the city there were advertisenents which let it be known that Mary nd Doug would appear in person. Mary wanted the author to be there, oo, and she wrote asking her to come. Mrs. Burnett was at the Madison Square Hotel at the time, but she had een ill and was terribly weak. She nswered that, unfortunately, it was mpossible. When Mary got that note he cried bitterly and they told Mrs. Burnett. So straight out of bed she ot, had herself dressed, and fought her vay through a solid wall of Mary and Doug fans, collected to see their god nd goddess descend from a motor.

I was astonished when I saw her in the lobby of the theatre, clinging to the arm of a friend, almost breathless from the exertion. "Mary Pickford so wanted me to come", she said.

She climbed to one of the upper boxes and a few minutes later Mary and Doug took possession of the box opposite. Then Mary rose. Terrific applause. She stilled it and began to speak. To my amazement I heard her say that she had hoped to have the author there, but that Mrs. Burnett was too ill to come. To please Mary she had made an effort really dangerous, and Mary did not even know she was there.

The old Prince Regent of Bavaria was ninety two when he died. Shortly before the end he remarked to a withered peasant, "I don't notice the years at all."

And the peasant answered: "Perhaps not, your majesty, but others certainly notice them on you."

I often heard Mrs. Burnett say: "I never think of age", and a rude thought like the peasant's never even crossed my mind. Why should she have thought of age? Romance has no age. She refused to let life force her into ruts.

For years, in her beautiful home in Plandome, she had occupied a bedroom fitted out in a queenly way, with intricately inlaid furniture, the bed, its softness fathoms deep, canopied in rich taffeta. If, in the minds of her friends, she was firmly identified with this room, as the old are, not so in her own. Last year she had a guest room done over in a way that was intentionally, delightfully frivolous — and then she moved into it.

The walls were papered in pale grey and rose. An artist had been summoned to decorate the grey enameled furniture with roses, to match the rose of the walls. The bed was a glowing

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softness, and Mrs. Burnett upon it, propped on embroidered pillows, was dressed in rose silk nightgown and lace trimmed boudoir cap.

A gallant thing for a woman in the thick of the seventies to do! There she would receive the women house guests in the morning. There breakfast would be taken together, amid happy talk. Later in the day the maid would dress her carefully, even elaborately, and she would sit in the garden if the weather was fine, and perhaps receive visitors.

Those of her friends who knew her best called her "Fluffy". She got the nickname in the days when women's hair was back-combed and stood out, halo fashion, and gowns were flounced and billowy. Even to the last "Fluffy" suited the airy quality of her.

There were times when we talked o death, she and I, quite cheerfully Death — the happy ending. She tol me of an illness she had had in London After this talk I wrote down her words

"I lay there", she said, "so weal that I couldn't even lift my eyelids It seemed to me that outside of m windows there was a great light, sapphire light, like sunshine strikin through ocean water. I felt that I wa going into that light — was about to b merged into it — and I wanted to tel people about this — the people wh feared death so. I wanted to say t them: 'Death isn't terrible. It i beautiful.'"

When she was really dying, the lifted her to see the sunset over Lon Island Sound.

"How beautiful", she breathed.

## WEDDING SONG

By Beatrice Ravenel

I SHALL wish you no years of delight,
No sure unassailable vow.
Yours are the day and the night,
Yours is the Now.

They have given you more than is theirs,
The gods, whose completion endures,
They are fixed from the play of the years.
The instant is yours;

The living of life, the acclaim
Of joy in the vanishing spark,
The shattering cry of the flame
On the crest of the Dark!

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# THE SOUTH AND LITERATURE

## By Richard Burton

IN wanderings wide and many over the south, talking literature to all sorts of folk, it has been of interest to me to try to put my finger on the reaction to books in that section of the land. It is an elusive quest, if not an illusory. But the attempt has its piquancy, perhaps to others, even as to myself.

One of the first things to notice is the somewhat touchy mood when the southern contribution seems underestimated. Doubtless, this reaction goes back to much earlier misappreciation or neglect. Nor is every insistence on national value of an author of necessity accepted below Mason and Dixon's line. Literary merit alone is not full payment, if unfair treatment is involved. Once, talking for a week in Galveston on American literature, my mouth was opened to pay a warm tribute to the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin". I hoped the fact that I had lived as next door neighbor to Mrs. Stowe up to her death might lend some attractive color to the narration. But I refrained in the nick of time, realizing that a eulogy would have been received with gelidity, if not with good round hisses. And why not? We are now far enough away from the event frankly to acknowledge that the south has a right to be restive under the depiction of slavery in that indubitably great book.

Speaking more generally, for many years southern literature was ignored, or at the best patronized by northern critics; the logical result was ultra-sensitiveness on the part of southerners. The galled jade winces. The younger generation hardly understands how true this is. The critical essays of Poe, only superficially a southerner but a champion nevertheless in some sort, may advantageously be read with these facts in mind. The splendid contribution of the south to our romantic fiction, dating from the 1880's, has brought a sweet revenge; and substantive justice has been, is being, rendered and a broader basis for critical recognition established. But the accomplishment of this result required the fine work of such writers as Mark Twain, Cable, Richard Malcolm Johnston, Harris, Allen, Page, Tarkington, down to O. Henry and Cabell — to name but a few of the distinctive delineators of varied aspects of the genius native to the south.

To mention another trait: the southerner as such, regarded as author or reader, is naturally conservative. If not, it is because he has acquired the sophisticated New York attitude, become a nomad or an urbanite where literary tests and standards are more cosmopolitan. The conservatism of the south, as I see it, roots in that clinging to kin, that caring for family with all the word implies; and that respect for and love of the past which centres in clan and kin and which, whatever its drawbacks, often blossoms into much that is admirable. Indeed, it offers a needed antidote to the general heterogeneity now on parade in the United States. That the governor of one



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southern state should refrain on principle from attendance at the inaugural dance; that the president of a leading state college should dismiss one of the teaching force because Robinson's "Mind in the Making" was used in the classroom; and that Mr. Bryan's amusing views on evolution should best flourish in those parts, are signs of the less happy side of the tendency. But when it comes to literary estimates, the bright side is often uppermost; one detects a clean and wholesome contempt — or better, neglect — of the eccentric enormities of the "advanced" school. There is little use way down in Dixie for the blatant, outré, and vulgar, or for the risqué and decadent. An assumption seems prevalent that good taste, elegance, and breeding are still desirable in our letters. There is an old fashioned tendency to be shocked; a feeling that even literature has social obligations; that a writer is, after all, nothing but a human being writing and therefore subject to the same general laws and restrictions as are other humans. The notion that genius is outside the pale, to be judged by laws of its own, is looked at askance in Tennessee, and eke in Kentucky, however it may be in the great southwest — in Texas and Arkansas. Let me add just here that the frequent northern astigmatism which sees the southwest, as well as the west, as radical and impatient of restraints, does not tally with the facts at all. Those parts of the land are prevailingly more timorously conservative than the blasé sections of New England and New York.

The very clannishness of the south creates a greater sensitiveness to the violations of family ties and duties. Loose living in fiction or drama is likely to be reprobated much as it would be if actually occurring in the reader's own town. The south has not yet learned the delight of being innocently and vicariously naughty — in fiction. I am positive that the relative sale of books like "Many Marriages" or "Women in Love", *et id omne genus*, would bear out my assertion of the survival of the elder canons of taste and morals. I do not speak of this in order to indulge in the stock exclamation "O tempora! O mores!" but merely to set down a fact of some interest in what may be called the sociological significance of our literature.

Nothing is more marked in the extreme literature today than the decay of privacy. And the south takes but hardly to this willingness for personal exploitation at the price of taste, and is repelled by books full of it. Recent autobiographies reek with intimacies once never permitted on the printed page. The south is far more likely to dub such a deliverance inartistic than we of the north country. With jazz forever in our ears, "loudness" in dress, speech, manners, and morals tends to become less obnoxious. The south is a bulwark against the drift in that direction. The change in the very definition of "privacy" within a generation is astounding. One might call privacy today anything you are lucky enough to keep out of the newspapers. Those inclined to be alarmed, however, at the license of the moment, should take heart at the thought that there are fashions in the arts and letters as truly as in woman's garb. It is distinctly modish to be "tough" today — if you would be of the cognoscenti. But once upon a time, it was quite as much a sign of being in the know to be "tender"; to prove it, go back and read the lachrymose fiction and poetry of the eighteenth century, when the Lydia Languishes of the period carried "sentiment", which is to say, mawkish

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sentimentality, to a pitch almost unbelievable now. I no more think the young matrons and maids of that era were as squeamish in life as they appear in letters, than I think our young women nowadays are half as bold and mannish as they are paraded in current stories. It is a pose, more or less, whether the former daintiness or the present devilishness. Today's naughtiness will pass, as has the pre-Victorian excess of femininity. Meanwhile, the south has not so entirely severed the filaments connecting it with the rose-water maidens of old who sighed on principle, and wept whenever ennui overcame them. Those who forget the excesses of sentimentality and the ideal of the lily-like ladyhood of the English tradition, are commended to Dr. Samuel Crothers's sprightly essay in the book entitled "The Cheerful Giver". It contains both amusement and instruction on the subject.

Closely related to this conservatism, social and religious as well as literary, is the tendency, marked and familiar to all who have cognizance of our American literature, toward romanticism. Probably "romantic" is the adjective that would first be applied in speaking of the southern contribution to letters. And what is romance — in an age stressing homely, not to say ugly, realism — but one phase of the conservative? This instinct for high coloring in the depiction of life, an emphasis upon the finer aspects of character and insistence upon beauty as precious in human experience, pertains to the southern writing whenever and wherever it is most itself, closest to its traditions and ideals. It is suggestive to see a late writer like Cabell at war within himself: as true southern, he has a hang for picturesque mediævalism; as slightly disillusioned contemporary critic, he gives us "The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck" or the subtle sardonics of "Jurgen". It is beauty tartly tempered by the *Zeitgeist!*

Every speaker in the south, albeit half unconscious of the reason, feels in the very air the sympathy for romantic expression. The ideal of oratory is still more flamboyant, chromatic, and sesquipedalian than in colder climes. In today's idiom, the south will stand for rhetoric more willingly than will New England, New York, or California. One instinctively gives his periods more sonority and rondure. And, yielding to this responsiveness, one makes bolder forays into poetry. Our southern friends are not so shy of high-falutin language, verse or prose, as are other sections. Hence, I have found that the new school of writers who stress the so called realistic in word and type and scene, like Sandburg or Frost, are less likely of a warm reception. There is a marked preference for the good old fashioned sentiment and ornament, and for the sublimation of the bald and commonplace. It is the romantic tradition and convention obviously at work.

On the social side, the female of the species is more likely to be a "lady" than a mere "woman". One says "Yes ma'am" in addressing the spindle side of the house, not as an exhibition of gaucherie but as a pleasant reminder of days more chivalric. We are often called the "mannerless nation". Nowhere is there so definite a survival of social etiquette as in the south. Its charm must be felt by any thoughtful social observer, especially when he is in contact with the elder generation. What the manners of the younger generation, so often transplanted educationally to far lying states remote from the south, will be, is a grim reminder that "the old order changeth, yielding place to new". But the

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particular point here is, that the extra sensitiveness to gentility gets into literary expresssion, qualifies literary appreciation, and is pretty sure to tinge literary production, whenever it remains truly of the south. One stunned and disgusted by so much in violation of good breeding is moved to add: Long may it remain.

When the literary historian of our era looks back upon the American scene, and endeavors to state the part played by the south in the general movement, I fancy the clannish tendency, the romantic bent, the hang for local color with its concomitant liking for the conservative view, will be named as definite aspects of the total contribution. And today, one striving sympathetically to feel the literary pulse of the south is encouraged because he finds the patient on the whole in good health and likely to instil into the more or less muddy arteries of the organism the vital blood of that sort of sectionalism which today, as always in the past is the best basis for a sound nationalism. If you doubt it, consider Shakespeare; or else Dante who, intensely local, achieved universality.

## TO A SCIENTIST

By Maxwell Bodenheim

YOU sit within a room and call it life:
You measure doom with cunning implements,
And yet the tangled loves and hates we know
Exist without your censures and consents.
The sober, pleading questions of our minds
And every smothered pain within our hearts
Will not believe that something known as life
Can be divided into small, clear parts.
Imagination is the sworn, quick foe
Of logic's latest certainty and seeks
To smash the opaque graveness of all walls
And lunge to subtler heights beyond all peaks.
You can deride the stride of fantasy
And call it flimsy, witless wandering,
But every treasure of reality
Was purchased once by fancy's squandering.
Beyond your room the stalwart mysteries
Will never shrink to fit your rod and glass,
And every inch you cover will unearth
A billion inches which you still must pass.
Be less intolerant of poet's games
And men who trifle with a word called soul,
For they, like you, are simply begging gnomes
Within an unexplained and troubled whole.

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# THE SKETCH BOOK

*Edward Larocque Tinker—Fairfax Downey—Thomas Beer*

## WHITEWASHING

By Edward Larocque Tinker

THE OTHER day I had occasion to visit one of the greatest of the privately owned libraries still in existence. Preliminaries had been necessary, and after a certain amount of correspondence I had been given a date by letter as far ahead as a dentist appointment. When the day finally arrived and I approached the perfectly impassive but artistically impeccable front of the edifice, a feeling of chilliness swept over me. When one of its pair of ponderous doors finally opened a crack to permit of my sliding in, the frigidity of its mausoleum-like interior almost started my teeth chattering and caused my usual cheerfulness to drain out by way of my boots.

I was left by a liveried lackey in a gorgeous but depressing room, where the rich glow of the illuminated page of a famous Bible, shining through its glass case, seemed to bring a ray of sunshine into that sombre interior. A hushed and lonely wait ensued before the lady dictator of these bookish safe deposit vaults appeared, bringing the particular manuscripts I had ventured into such polar climes to see. Simply dressed she was and with a most active mind, in which she appeared to store an efficient and amazing card catalogue of literary information.

I was on the trail of Lafcadio Hearn, and she mentioned certain unpublished letters of his that she had seen. I was all excitement, but fell into a terrible gloom when she said, "The owner of those letters said he would destroy them before he died, and — he died several years ago." I was aghast, and could only blurt out, "Why did he do it?" "Oh, they were smutty in spots!" replied this czarina of the library. "But that's nothing", she continued with perfect *sang-froid*. "I've destroyed right in this very room letters written by George Washington." I became inwardly indignant. I wanted to ask rude questions as to her qualifications for the post of expurgator to the Father of her Country. I sat on the safety valve, however, as the cool voice continued, "Oh, yes, they were smutty too, so I did not want them ever to become public and destroy the ideal of Washington that has flourished for so long. It was only a question of money. Could we afford to pay the price and then destroy our investment? We could and did." "But", I sputtered, the strain becoming too great, "do you think it's right to aid, by the suppression, nay destruction of evidence, in the manufacture of a purely apocryphal historic character?" "Yes," was the calm retort, "even if it only served to keep alive in our schools the fable of the cherry tree."

This doctrine gained the immediate



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support of my wife, who is a strong believer in a sort of intellectual feudal system in which the serfs and vassals (those of lesser mentality) should be allowed only so much knowledge as would serve to make them useful in their appointed place in the mental hierachy. She seemed to feel that the setting up of such popular idols was most useful in the maintaining of proper allegiance. Consequently she advanced her heavy guns to the defense of my opponent, and I found myself outnumbered and silenced, but not convinced.

Many times since have I pondered over the ethics of this question of destroying letters and manuscripts of dead men of note. Styles in proprieties, as in dress, are continually changing. The rolled stocking and short skirts of the present generation would have scandalized the securely pantaletted susceptibilities of even the demimonde of the mid-Victorian era — and that is not so long ago. Even today among ourselves we are nowhere near unanimous in the acceptance of any particular code of the decorous. Dancing is still damnation to the strict Methodist, and facts that are superpornographic to the narrow bigot are merely commonplace, necessary, and useful to the broad minded psychoanalyst.

In view of such drastic divergences of opinion as to the proprieties of behavior, is it not a very disastrous proceeding for any one person to arrogate to himself the position of sole arbiter of the literary proprieties, especially since, in destroying what he condemns, he allows of no appeal from his judgment? May not the literary boll weevil of today, who sates his peculiar appetite for virtue by extirpating letters and manuscripts of distinguished dead authors, be in reality robbing future generations of matter that they would have considered treasure trove if they had been given the chance to assay it? No incident "points the moral and adorns the tale" more aptly than the classic one of Lady Burton. Her husband, Sir Richard, had devoted the last years of his life and the full powers of his ripe scholarship to the translation of a priceless Persian manuscript, "The Scented Garden". The work was to rival his famous translation of "The Thousand and One Nights" and was completed only a few days before his death. Lady Burton, keeping her last lonely vigil beside the corpse of her husband, discovered the manuscript and, shocked by the frankness with which the translation had rendered certain oriental theories as to love, then and there threw it into the fire. Imagine the literary loss, had that estimable lady been able to wreak her will upon "The Thousand and One Nights" also.

Not only may the unbridled self appointed censor destroy much of literary value, but he may also do grave injustice to the popularity of authors upon whose memory he wields his lethal whitewash brush. There is in all of us, to a greater or lesser degree, an inherent interest in gossip, in the slightly salacious, in learning the manner in which our neighbor has met his or her sex problem — a question common to us all. The astute publisher is thoroughly cognizant of this very human predilection, and as a consequence he often struggles manfully to have his books suppressed or put on the Index Expurgatorius, because he knows that nothing else will so boost his sales.

Lord Byron furnishes a case in point. In an article in "The Atlantic

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Monthly" called "Men, Women and the Byron Complex", Katharine Fullerton Gerould has pointed out that all the commentators on Byron, with one exception, have been concerned with Byron the man, and that they have wrangled over the details of his affair with Lady This or Lady That to the exclusion of any attempt to evaluate his literary output. If this conception is correct and Byron's fame does hang, in part, upon the picturesqueness of his life and his notoriety as a pyrotechnic profligate, would it have been fair to minimize that fame by destroying all his various most indiscreet epistles to the fair sex?

If he had been able, Byron would have prevented the destruction of his memoirs by his executors, because he wished to leave a certain picture of himself for future generations. What more right had his executors to step in and alter this picture by suppressing the memoirs, than they had to disregard the wishes expressed in his will for the distribution of his property? Even in this day of confiscatory inheritance laws, an author should at least be permitted to dispose of his memory as he sees fit.

When the letters and manuscripts destroyed are those of distinguished literary men, we may lose much and grave injustice may be done to the dead; but when the letters are those of a person of historical importance — such as George Washington — yet another even more serious evil creeps in. History should be as exact a science as, say, chemistry. Of course we know it isn't, but that in no way alters the advisability of having it so; only when our historical facts are given to us with scientific accuracy and impartiality shall we be able to use them to light our future footsteps. Admitting this preamble then, is it not productive of harmful results to whitewash our leading historical personage till we can't see the color of his skin — to make of him merely a machinistic marble demigod, by deliberately destroying all evidence that he had ever been in any way human?

She who had the power of life and death in the aforementioned library clung stoutly to the opinion that the apocryphal copybook Washington, which she had done her part in preserving, had been a far greater inspiration to American school children than a truthful picture of him could ever have been. But I cannot feel that the inculcation of grossly inaccurate facts will ever be in harmony with the best theories of modern education; and as for any inspirational effect of the Washington fable upon adults — what person of any discernment likes the copybook type of anything? It always lacks the craftsman's touch, the mark of the potter's thumb — those slight inequalities that make for sympathy and beauty. Besides, would not the sight of so much superhuman virtue stuffed in the effigy of one man, discourage in a normal person any thought of imitation? The vastness of the task would certainly paralyze such a one into inanition before he had even started. On the other hand, far from being a source of discouragement, the knowledge that Washington had accomplished all that he did for his country in spite of certain very human foibles would, to my mind, make emulation seem much more feasible to the average mortal.

No, the suppression of historical data can only spell the prostitution of history; and to the phrase "historical data" a most generous inclusion must be allowed, since it should embrace

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all information which may serve to make more understandable the personality or thought processes of anyone of historical importance. The substitution of a myth for a scientific fact will always be unethical, because such substitution acts as a hindrance to human progress.

Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to say that the destroyed Washington letters should immediately have been blazoned in the Sunday Supplement under scareheads such as, "Terrible Scandal in Historical High Life", "Father of His Country Forced to Flee", etc., etc. Not at all. I do feel, however, that these letters should have been preserved in such manner as to be available to the serious student; the possessors of such documents being regarded merely as custodians for future generations, in order that those who follow us may draw their own conclusions in the light of their further knowledge or change in point of view.

In a world of so much sameness, I should hate to see our legacy of memories of the great dead pruned down to the stultifying uniformity of a soldiers' cemetery, stretching out in serried similar lines of mound and headstone, each one the monotonous counterpart of every other. If we wish to avoid this catastrophe, we must set our faces sternly against that colorless class of persons who believe that, once a man of genius dies, he should at once be canonized and clothed with all the conventional virtues — even those he most detested while alive — until the only memory of the man that is permitted to survive is molded into the form of a sort of wooden toy soldier of unbending propriety, shape and outlines so sandpapered, smoothed and blurred, that all character, interest, and life is lost.

## TOM MOORE AND BERMUDA

By Fairfax Downey

TOM MOORE is as much poet laureate of the Bermuda Islands today as if he were living and such an appointment existed, with an annual perquisite of a butt of Bermuda milk punch. It matters naught that the coral isles are a loyal colony of the British Crown and that said Crown has a regular laureate in the quick. The spirit of the sentimental Irishman and his lays are established in the affections of the Bermudians for good and all, though he spent less than four months there in the post of registrar of the Court of Vice Admiralty or, as they describe it now, "a sort of Customs man". If time and tide wait for anybody, they must for a poet-Customs man.

Bermuda was and is particularly hospitable to men of the pen of high or humble degree, and the young Irishman was welcomed when he arrived via Virginia in 1804. True, he came in a Customs capacity, not to sing the beauties of Bermuda, but it must have been reasoned there was nothing to prevent his keeping his eyes open — at least out of office hours. The songs he sang of those temperate-tropical isles flourish like their flowers. You may hear them proudly quoted today, even by the darkies.

Any Bermudian can direct you to Tom Moore's house, if only you make yourself plain by giving the double "o" its full value and eliding the name, "Tommoore". Far more can send you there than can tell you it wasn't his house at all. The stately coral stone dwelling which was built in the cedar woods of Walsingham in 1652, charmingly mirrored in a still lagoon, was the home of the Trott family.

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Moore was there often, but he actually resided in St. George's town. Which, by way of dissertation, goes to show the folly of having a poet visit one. It is so very likely to cook one with posterity. Much the same thing as having had General George Washington drop in on one for a minute or so in '76. One's manse was Washington's Headquarters from then on and no getting away from it.

"Tom Moore's House" is a tavern now, with an American — you may be sure — holding the concession; nor can the conversion seem an altogether profane one to the wraith of the author of "Fill the Bumper Fair" and "Wreathe the Bowl". Few modernizations mar the venerable structure. Wooden pins, instead of nails, still serve it for joinings and oaken benches and a Dutch oven survive. Upon the walls of the taproom hang woodcuts and engravings of the poet and his more familiar verse.

Darky tapsters answer your call. They are willing — and competent — to talk of Tom Moore. Their knowledge of the poet, his life and works, is apt to shame that of the visitor. And they deny, do these dusky litterateurs, that they were forced to cram on Moore to hold their jobs. They "knew 'bout him befo'", they insist.

"You know," they remark easily, "Tommoore wrote 'Believe Muh, If All Those Endearin' Young Chahms', 'Luv's Young Dream', 'Thuh Las' Rose uv Summuh', an' 'Thuh Time Ah've Los' in Wooin''; what'll you have t' drink, suh?"

If you hesitate, they suggest a Tom Collins, a Tom and Jerry, or a Tom Moore Special, which last is a cocktail of no little authority. It is probably apocryphal, but if Tom quaffed it, he most certainly must have taken it in a bumper. Riding a bicycle home after several Tom Moore Specials is an unofficial outdoor sport in Bermuda.

But to revert to the Islands' causes of fondness for the poet. Of the world that loves a lover, Bermuda probably is the capital, for it is a favorite haven of honeymooners. As many as seventy couples of 'em have been counted and authenticated voyaging thence on one and the same steamer — which is probably a record catch. These newly wedded pairs may be encountered all about the islands, busy being alone. Not only are they locally condoned, they are encouraged. To tender emotions Tom Moore was, of course, no stranger. Bermuda knew and knows him as a lover through his "Odes to Nea".

The innocent but ardent attentions of Moore to "Nea", the lovely wife of a Bermudian gentleman, stirred the jealousy of the husband. "Nea", Moore said, was an ideal made out of two real women, but that could not be entirely reassuring when he wrote:

Nay, tempt me not to love again,
There was a time when love was sweet;
Dear Nea! had I known thee then,
Our souls had not been slow to meet!

Poetic license is not always confined to metaphors and similes. And it was Moore who wrote the epigram:

"Come, come," said Tom's father, "at your time of life,
There's no longer excuse for this playing the rake.
It is time you should think, boy, of taking a wife."
"Why, so it is, father, — whose wife shall I take?"

No wonder "Nea's" husband banned the Irishman's works from his library. No doubt he speeded the parting poet.

Through disappointment in his office and its remuneration, Moore sailed away in April, leaving his registrar-

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ship to a deputy. His laurels were perfectly safe in Bermuda, but his accounts were not, for the deputy juggled them to the tune of several thousand pounds, a loss which cost Moore sore and kept him out of England two years. Nevertheless he retained his Bermuda office through forty years of absence; about thirty nine and one half years longer, American visitors remark, than the boys down at the city hall and county courthouse back home would have let any such soft job lie around loose, poet or no poet.

So it happens that scribes are welcomed to Bermuda today and are the recipients of sweet deference and flattering interest. If they cannot quite understand that — although most of them can without great difficulty — they may find the explanation in the memory of their illustrious predecessor, Tom Moore.

## SCREAMING EAGLES

By Thomas Beer

THE bird is in disrepute, of course. Someone or other in Russia has damned it for an aristocratic, burgher, and reactionary symbol. It is certainly predatory, probably capitalistic, openly Imperialist. Even its maternal activity, lugging home lamb or defenseless Alpine baby, is the pose of the marauder. It lives saturnine, dies aloof. This is no day for a character so frankly antisocial. Our moment is vowed to the meritorious, prolific hen, to the rabbit — that Iphigenia of science — to the plaintive, useful jackass. Brute gods may as well be biddable; an eagle makes a poor household divinity. If I must mourn its damnation I shall still think of it flown, in full plume, to its austere habitation beyond the gaping of man.

The eagle of our national coinage is directly fathered by the Olympian eagle of Flaxman's illustrated Homer. Flaxman had, it seems, a sly humor that flowered in corners. His eagle acts as a disdainful commentator — a supervisor, perhaps. Its complete attitude toward the family fight on Olympus is that of a metropolitan dramatic reviewer visiting the suburban theatre under protest. It doesn't even take Zeus seriously. Its sole approving gesture is one of bright interest in Aphrodite. Herein, I think, Flaxman was wise. Was there ever a great critic who wasn't, in some degree, a feminist? And Flaxman appears the only artist who has given the eagle its rightful post, who has understood that its worldly job is a symbol of the detached, independent mind afloat above the confusion of arts and industries.

American criticism has lately crept out of hiding and now assumes its due place at the head of the table, looking strange. It has been a long time in the pantry, dressing dishes. It emerged now and then, shivered before the frown, and fled back to its sink. It arrives in an ill chosen moment. This is the decade of propaganda, of bitter bawling, of press agents. A critic has no business with these things. He is singularly unwelcome. Being asked, "With or against me?" his honest answer must be, "Neither", and that answer never pleased. If he is an ordinary fellow he shrinks into a party and is lost. He has made a truce with the hen and the jackass. His eagleship is gone out of him. He is a cooked goose, a detail in the dinner of some prouder bird, buzzard's meat.

My dictionary, noble and humorless

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volume, gives me "a summum genus or widest class", in secondary definition of the word "category". I wonder how useful that would be to a night schooled stevedore struggling with Dr. Veblen's version of the English language. A dictionary is antipathetic, though. Whoever went to war for a dictionary or blubbered on the grave of its maker? But I am concerned with this secondary definition. "American criticism", says a nameless French journalist, "deals in broad categories. It retires before any consideration of the individual and the individual style. It seeks safety in the largest generalities." It retires, he might add, itself into a category.

There rose, in the last ten years, a great roar for the "humanizing" of criticism. What it meant or means, I don't know. Criticism is a function of the human intelligence. Superhuman criticism expired some time since. We have inhuman criticism of man and his poor affairs wherever a cat waves its tail. This "humanizing" of criticism demands, I suppose, the exposition of critical thought in terms comprehensible to an average. Well, the demand has been fully met. Humanized criticism hit its hot zenith when a professor of English letters thus defined Mr. George's "Caliban": "Live wire stuff. This is real writing, a printed Mary Pickford." I shall expect to hear of Bourdelle's "Herakles" as a sculptural Charlie Chaplin, of Van Wyck Brooks's next book as an impapyrate Jack Dempsey.

Whenever was American criticism anything but human and tragically human? It has been partizan from end to end. It is partizan, today, in nine out of ten handlings. Its whole flavor has been one of tepid conciliation. It conciliates a herd or a clique. It accepts prevalent ideas with all the gusto of an ambitious copper queen hunting protective coloration at a smart seaside hotel. It meekly concedes anything to the cry for large massing. Actual independence is no more admired than in the day of Poe. The whole critical process becomes a mere battering of opposed sentimentalisms. We go chasing after symptoms and, getting one, produce a leper. Has Kenneth Burke objected to the style of Floyd Dell? Well, that proves Mr. Burke a reactionary. Mr. Mencken sniffs at Sargent's portraits? The man has an anti-Anglo-Saxon inferiority complex! Dr. Phelps says a kind word for Dorothy Canfield? He's a Puritan!

What is criticism? The scaling of presented merits against a range established by the individual brain; a law of partial credits; a selective habit. Who are the great critics? The men who exercised this function with clarity, sympathy, and honesty. I shall blister my palms applauding a critic who praises or blames with a full consciousness of his calling. When he turns corybant or scavenger I give up. Criticism is a function of the mind. How much mind has a steam whistle?

If anyone wants proof of the national adolescence, let him read criticism of critics as commonly practised. The thing is done with all the amenities of a moonlit cat fight, all the grace of an octogenarian stomach dancer. The treatment of Waldo Frank's "Our America" and Mrs. Gerould's "Modes and Manners" shows the state in full bloom. Our American criticism, faced by two difficult books, simply shed its manners and reached for mud. That sweating "privatdozent" of Mr. Mencken will enjoy the results fifty years hence. I wish him an equable digestion, not subject to sudden nausea.

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The invisible auditor here points out the existence of Mr. X., Miss Y., and Professor Z., competent and mannerly critics. I don't deny the existence. My complaint is of a herd. And I am not lamenting the decease of that critical school wherein a Sabbatical calm was the temper favored. I choose to decry the facile prejudice, the partizan quality of the American temperament, its uneasy attitude in opposition. Heywood Broun recently deplored the impulsive quality of the socialist mind. Why stop there? Go on. Anyone who has written, however gently, sketches of a western or a southern village knows the resultant letter of defense, exhortation, and defiance. I regret the amplification of "Main Street" as a national highway. The Philistine Pharisee who says "Bosh!" to his Juvenal and goes to sleep again is at least a respectable swine. He is mature. He has the grand manner of the sty. Like Patrick Scarlet's cow, he knows that contentment is the most aristocratic of all virtues. But even that virtue quits a howling "Main Street", a Gopher Prairie vocal in its conservative parlor and its radical bedroom.

This immature shrillness echoes elsewhere. It isn't fair to say, "Scratch an American, you'll find a child." The loud fluency of the second-rate is universal. (I once tried to discuss Charles-Louis Philippe's "Père Perdrix" with the great lady of a small French town.) The current and vulgar bawling in England has roused a protestant in the shape of John Drinkwater. Corybantics have always been popular in France. The Italianissimi have devised a shade of invective that outdoes Tertullian — Italy still possessing one entire critic with claws, a beak, and plumage in good order. The invisible auditor can argue that we aren't much worse than anyone else. Rubbish!

Slowly and shakily, without a single prominent backer, the name of André Gide has crept forward. L'Immoraliste has arrived. The metropolitan cerebrals know all about him. (As usual, he was first advertised in the land by a western reporter.) There is a Gide *culte*. I confidently expect an explosion of Giderie in five or six years. Lately, referring to the above mentioned Philippe in company, I was gladdened by the discovery that two witnesses had heard of him through this same Gide who went to his funeral and wrote most touchingly of the sad business. Now Gide is a man of thin thought and exquisite texture. He is not an eagle. He is, if you please, a graceful and swift sparrow hawk. Well, the two birds have much in common. An eagle can kill a vulture; a sparrow hawk isn't afraid of one. The figure goes neatly ahead; the long duel between Gide and Remy de Gourmont took that form. The sparrow hawk assailed the vulture.

De Gourmont is chiefly known in this country by his last work — a novel. It was a jazz on Christianity. Some analyst had better busy himself with the French religious preoccupation. I mean the preoccupation of the French irreligious with the figure of Christ. There is something sophomoric in the endless sniggering of a certain French type before the crucifix. It is not unlike Mark Twain's dueling with the Sunday School literature, and it hasn't Mark Twain's excuse. "Night in the Luxembourg" is not de Gourmont at his best but it represents him fully. Its whole content is available in the banquet scene of "Thaïs", by the way. Shaw's review of "The Sign of the Cross" is the same thing done finely. De Gourmont was

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paradoxical, hyper-Shavian, twisting, humorous as well as witty, a bluffer, a cad. He excelled in grating statement and over-statement. He drew blood at any stroke. Organized charity is ineffective? Then the nursing sister is a criminal. Chastity a virtue? How much more chaste is the female mole than the Christian virgin. The mole burrows through the ground to escape her lover! That last specimen got almost a shriek from Gide. On this, as on other points, the sparrow hawk came to battle.

The fight seems to me a model of cool, detached criticism conducted with dignity and sense. De Gourmont asserts, sneers, yells. Gide answers with a sort of chill indignation. He establishes, and constantly repeats, his scale of partial credits. De Gourmont has wit, taste, audacity, style, Gide admits — and then what? Gide exactly parades the defects and their tendencies. He does not suggest that de Gourmont is a fool, a liar or a presumptive criminal. His justice is meticulous, unwearied. He is neither the schoolmaster, nor the gutter ruffian. He places the objection of the aristocratic scholar against the proposition of the sciolist thug.

As revealed, the mind of Gide isn't world shaking. It is courageous, susceptible, certain. He has his own preoccupations, is engaged in a kind of saraband with the Church for partner. He seldom creates. The vesture of his novels, closet drama, and essays is a glittering thing. The glitter is a product of chosen, rather pale, tints. Gide represents the selective habit pushed to its height. At least, it seems to be a healthy sign that he has a niche among the gods of our intelligent. A sparrow hawk is a trim, compact bulk, preferable certainly to the peacock and the jackass.

So I come back to my mixed and corrupted metaphor. I want eagles. There are plentiful eaglets — a bit scrawny, something too timid, inclined to run cheeping with the hennish kind, given to gaping at the donkey much more than is healthy, worried about that matter of protective coloration. White and red are too important. What do white and red matter in the air, against the sun? An eagle is an eagle, responsible to itself. Its wings fling down a shadow on the bland utility of the household brutes. The hen clucks on the evocation of her ancient dread, the ass sends up a thin bray that loses force a few yards from the mud. The eagle screams only in passion to its mate, in combat with an equal enemy.

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# SALUTE TO SABATINI

## By Grant Overton

*With a Portrait by Bertrand Zadig*

ONE of the brightest prospects for succeeding as a writer in English is to be alien to the tongue. Mr. Conrad, Michael Arlen, and Edwin Björkman are three current examples; Rafael Sabatini is another. Only a Frenchman is apparently estopped, and one or more of the younger Frenchmen, Paul Morand for example, may erase this exception. It is useless to say that Mr. Sabatini is partly English. The man was born in Jesi of the Italian Marches; and although he was the son of Anna Trafford, his mother had lived in Italy since her girlhood and taught him only a few English phrases. His father, Vincenzo Sabatini, spoke no English. At school in Zug, Switzerland, and at the Lycée of Oporto, Portugal, he learned anything but English. "At eighteen I spoke and wrote five languages with almost equal fluency, and possessed the foundation of a sixth (English)." That was all. His father knew the value of such lingual knowledge in European business, especially in England, and sent him thither "dedicated to commerce". His mother's relatives were English, of course, and were thought likely to take an interest in him. This was in 1893; and the acquisition of English and a living went forward together for some years to come.

English? No. He is a British subject. In 1905, after he had had a small start as a novelist, he married Ruth Goad, of Lancashire; but to this day he writes and speaks to his mother only in Italian. He is simply a fellow countryman who, like Dante, has sighted a forest and lost himself in it; only in Sabatini's case the trees are historical events dressed in all the leafage of which the English language is capable. But the words of English are a deciduous foliage; the leaves are not few and evergreen like the words of other tongues. A writer like the earlier Conrad, or Arlen, or Sabatini is at home in English in very much the manner of a riotous small boy tossing red and gold and brown leaves in handfuls with exuberant whoops. Above, in bare, stripped outlines, with strength and grace against the color of the darkening sky, a few pages of English prose stand for a cycle or a century. . . . In every language but English there is the inevitable word; in English no word, only *words*, are inevitable.

Of course the spectacle of Mr. Conrad being subtle and Slav, of Mr. Arlen being orientally poetic and zestful, refreshes and delights us. Our maples, elms, and oaks look for a moment like pointed cypresses; the lustrous grey-green sheen of olives is over everything. But then someone of the most capable translates in veritable words of a snowy white beauty the prose of a Lagerlöf or a "Growth of the Soil", or gives us a page from the French as beautiful as the curved flight of arrows — whereupon the maples become plain shade trees, the elms reassert their immense respectability, and only the oak leaves among our words seem worthwhile.



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*Rafael Sabatini*



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But vocabulary is only one test of a writer, and by no means the first. Rafael Sabatini is Italian by virtue of his courage, which with his countrymen is so largely a form of unimaginable persistence; he is Italian in his rectitude — what he is, he is, and others may follow a fashion; but chiefly is he Italian in his scorn for his natural literary foes. You get it in this sentence: "A fairly well known novelist of the modern realistic school, by which I mean a synthetic author, an uninspired university product, a chronicler of unimportant and mainly sordid trifles, whose unimaginative and uninventive art lies somewhere between the arts of photography and journalism, whilst expressing, with that presumption which is the chief asset of his class, his contempt of the modern historical romance, has yet condescended to bestow upon Sir Walter Scott a pontifical benediction." *Evviva* Mussolini! I am sure Sabatini, the literary Fascist, would take all the realists out and either shoot them against a wall or at least dose them drastically with castor oil.

The story of Sabatini is unique among contemporary records solely because of that persistence which, if you like, you may dress as a virtue and call courage. He came to England the year before Stevenson died in Samoa. His first English years saw the rise of the tidal wave of historical fiction, a wave that floated immense quantities of rubbish. In the midst of a lot of surprising trash, he came upon a few good things:

> Mary Johnston impressed me profoundly when I was still a youngster. The memory of two books of hers, "Prisoners of Hope" (1898) and "To Have and to Hold" (1900), read and reread many years ago, haunts me to this day. The secret of her power — which I did not realize then, but realize now — lies in the fact that her writings read as the chronicling not of things studied but of things remembered, of things personally witnessed. That, I think, will be generally admitted to be the highest quality you may look for in the historical novel. It is a vitalizing quality, found only and not frequently in historical fiction of the most modern. It is the unobtrusive manifestation of that highest quality in all art; the concealment of the art.

As for Sir Walter Scott, his, in Sabatini's judgment, was not the art that conceals art. "Sound and scholarly . . . there is in reading him none of the illusion that he is relating to you something at first hand. On the contrary, he is almost at pains to reveal the means by which he builds his narrative." But what is the historical romance?

> In proper hands it has been and should continue to be one of the most valued and valuable expressions of the literary art. To render and maintain it so, however, it is necessary that certain well defined limits should be set upon the license which its writers are to enjoy. It is necessary that the work should be honest work; that preparation for it should be made by a sound, painstaking study of the period to be represented, to the end that a true impression may first be formed, and then conveyed. Thus, considering how much more far reaching is the novel than any other form of literature, the good results that must wait upon such endeavors are beyond question.

We shall return to this later. The young man in England, swimming in the literary wave of those years, began to try his hand at stories for magazines. He seems to have been surprised to find that they were marketable. A tale in "Pearson's Magazine" led to a commission to do a novel, "The Suitors of Yvonne" — or maybe it is "The Loves of Yvonne" — which appeared in 1902 and which was followed, two years later, by "The Tavern Knight". So far neither of these is included in the Autograph and Definitive Editions of Sabatini's work. Their chief importance was that they committed their author to authorship. The Black Shirt had set out for Rome.

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The situation was this: When Sabatini began to write, the sort of thing he wrote was current at face value or even at a premium. By the time he was in his stride, historical novels were not worth, commercially, the paper they were written on. His earlier work, or some of it, was not better than the ordinary lot of books of its sort then so popular. When the historical novel went out of fashion, it went out with the same sweep with which it had come forward. A public which had not practised any discrimination in liking it very consistently showed no discrimination when its taste had changed. To name only works of Sabatini's that are now popular, his books and the years of their first publication run thus:

1906 *Bardelys the Magnificent*
1909 *Saint Martin's Summer*
1910 *Mistress Wilding*
1912 *The Justice of the Duke*
1912 *The Life of Cesare Borgia*
1913 *The Strolling Saint*
1913 *Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition*
1915 *The Banner of the Bull*
1915 *The Sea-Hawk*
1917 *The Snare*
1918 *The Historical Nights' Entertainment: First Series*
1919 *The Historical Nights' Entertainment: Second Series*
1921 *Scaramouche*
1922 *Captain Blood*
1923 *Fortune's Fool*
1925 *The Carolinian**

The "Cesare Borgia", "Torquemada", and "Historical Nights' Entertainment" are history vivified with fictional touches; these aside, there are eight novels which appeared in 1906–17 almost unnoticed, the superb "Sea-Hawk" among them. In 1920 "Scaramouche" was published and America went wild over the fellow who "was born with a gift of laughter and a sense that the world was mad". It was the same America which had just gone wild over "Main Street", which was soon to go wild over "If Winter Comes", and which is never really excited over a book unless it thinks that book has become fashionable.

The success of "Scaramouche" is measured in half a dozen familiar ways. It sold its hundreds of thousands both in the regular and the cheap editions, of course. Rex Ingram made the film. Georges Baklanoff, of the Chicago Opera Company, bought such operatic rights as may exist in the story. There was a spoken play, produced by Charles Wagner, with Sidney Blackmer as Scaramouche. And soon eleven of Sabatini's books, new and old, were printing side by side on the presses at one time. The prospectus of the limited Autograph Edition appeared. The Definitive Edition was planned. This kind of history repeats itself.

But immediately all sorts of questions began to be asked. It was known, of course, that Sabatini had been writing books for twenty years. He was the sole survivor of the era of the historical novel. There were other writers still active who had been writing then, but they had changed their stuff in conformity to changed popular taste or else obeying their own laws of internal change, always more or less mysterious. Alone of all, Sabatini had gone on dealing with intrigues, escapes, romantic loves, devilish plots, and sword play. And now with a yarn of the French Revolution he had apparently knocked every kind of modern headgear into a cocked hat. As Terence or Plautus would have asked it: How come?

* The omitted titles and years of publication are as follows:
1902 *The Suitors of Yvonne*
1904 *The Tavern Knight*
1906 *The Trampling of the Lilies*
1907 *Love-at-Arms*
1908 *The Shame of Motley*
1911 *The Lion's Skin*
1914 *The Gates of Doom*

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The answers, which could not be made immediately, can be made now. In the first place, it is seen that Sabatini has not created a new fashion at all but has only revived an old one; it is even very doubtful if he has successfully revived it for anyone but himself. Naturally since "Scaramouche" he has had his imitators; none of them, I believe, has in any considerable measure succeeded. And without using the word "imitation", such a success as "Scaramouche" always serves to bring forward others who have the same kind of talent in some kind of degree — sometimes in a degree greater. But although I am convinced that this has happened, I do not see a duplicative success.

Again, there has naturally enough been plenty of recrimination and peccavism abroad. Some seven publishers are understood to have declined "Scaramouche". A New York publishing house offered to buy it outright for $250. "The Sea-Hawk" had gone begging, one New York publisher finally taking a small number of copies. For years, Sabatini had been turned down by American publishers. The head of a large publishing house remarked: "We were offered Sabatini. But the novels that were offered us were not 'Captain Bloods' or 'Scaramouches' or 'Sea-Hawks'." Commenting on this, Sabatini says: "The implication is that he is much too shrewd a fellow to have turned down one of these had he seen it in manuscript. He appears to be speaking with the voice of the American publishing trade in general." Is the author's accent a little sardonic? He is certainly entitled to whittle his finger at the publishers who declined "Scaramouche", but I think that otherwise he is on treacherous ground for derision.

For what are the facts? Possibly excepting "Bardelys", he had done nothing of the quality of his later work until "The Sea-Hawk". During those years he was offering novels by no means superlative to a public sated with that kind of fare, however excellent. "The Sea-Hawk" appeared in a world distracted by piracies more immediate and more terrifying than the exploits of a Barbary corsair. Moreover, his better work was trodden on the heels by books very doubtful if not decidedly inferior. He produced regularly a pretty good book and a bad book; regularly, with that peculiarly fatal regularity of the incurable novelist, and with that awful oscillation of good-bad-good-bad-good which makes publishers only less philosophical than polygamists. Mr. Sabatini may not know the full significance of this last detail, for English readers are very loyal to an author and follow him faithfully with only the most gradual of desertions. But in America, an author can lose almost his whole following with a single unsatisfactory book.

In short, the case is nothing like as simple as it may seem. I do not think it an exaggeration to say that Sabatini succeeded as soon as he deserved to succeed — barring the untimely appearance of "The Sea-Hawk" — and as soon (same exception) as his work deserved success. And I may say further that whatever the extent of American peccavism, it has been handsomely atoned for by the vogue he has enjoyed here since 1920, a vogue by which all his past work, "The Sea-Hawk" included, has profited to an extent at least as great as could be imagined in the first instance. In truth, after "Scaramouche" had succeeded, the name of its author was in the enviable position of an established trademark. It has been up to his readers if, satisfied with "Sabatini" on the cover,

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they have sometimes neglected to look for the same stamp on the selvage.

It has been intimated that we should not have the Sabatini of "The Sea-Hawk", "Scaramouche", and "Captain Blood" if his earlier work had enjoyed from the first a great popularity. Esther Forbes, whose article in the Boston "Evening Transcript"* is the only account I have seen that is worth anything, speaking of the faults of some of the books — a tinsel in their brilliance and a touch of the slapstick in their adventures — says very justly:

> Immediate success would doubtless have fostered these qualities in the author. Comparative obscurity obliterated them. For years he wrote to please himself and a very small but enthusiastic following. He is a trained historian. . . . In his later novels he is not afraid to show himself as such. He felt no fear of being "too historical" for a popular audience because he did not have one. His stories grew richer and more convincing. His characters took on a more rugged reality. His scenes, so well-rooted in historical knowledge, grew more tense with life. By the time "The Sea-Hawk" was published he was well in his stride.

Exactly. And not before.

By that time a good deal had happened to the lone literary Fascist. His Italian persistence was on the way to triumph. It was now merely a matter of living long enough for success to be assured. And since he was only forty, there was no reason why he should not live to enjoy that success. Besides, events were with him. The world was tumbling down about the ears of all who had not constructed their own personal worlds. Soon there would be a wide region of mental desolation in which the mind that craved an escape would crawl gratefully into any fashion of dugout or improvised shanty. What joy, then, to find one at hand constructing not a cabin but a *palazzo!*

As to these palaces, they are indubitable. Nothing so good as "The Sea-Hawk" had appeared since "The Count of Monte Cristo". And the secret of each of those masterpieces is in a revenge nurtured through many years and brought to a magnificent fruition. Love? Yes, a little. The historical atmosphere? That counts for a little more. But what really excites our imaginations is a determination to get even at any sacrifice and at all costs. No price is too steep for these heroes. We go through emotional bankruptcy with them. It is incomparable. It is like that moment in "Rigoletto" when a rapid violence invades the rhythms of the orchestra and we hear declaimed, in changed and rising tonalities:

*Si, vendetta, tremenda vendetta!*

"Tremendous" is right.

"Scaramouche" is picaresque; its popularity is of a piece with that of "The Three Musketeers", "Don Quixote", "The Beloved Vagabond", and "Cyrano de Bergerac" (I name widely different works which yet have a something in common, and that something the creation of character). As for "Captain Blood", it succeeds because it makes piracy respectable. Peter Blood, a respectable physician given to smoking his pipe and watering his window boxes of geraniums, is as irresistible as Captain Kidd, and far more human, for Kidd was a gentleman and his dignity was everything. Now in "The Carolinian" Mr. Sabatini selects for the first time an American subject. His time is the American Revolution, his scene, Charleston; his characters include John Rutledge and Colonel Laurens. Some years ago Mr. Sabatini wrote a play in collaboration with J. E. Harold-Terry with the same background.

"The Carolinian" seems to me much

* For June 28, 1924: *Rafael Sabatini and His Conquest of Fiction.*

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inferior to the great trio of "The Sea-Hawk", "Scaramouche", and "Captain Blood". I do not find the secret marriage of the hero, Harry Latimer, and Myrtle Carey very plausible. They are on opposite sides — or at least Myrtle's father, Sir Andrew Carey, is a rabid supporter of the British Crown. The best pages in the novel are those which relate the disharmonious life of the hero and heroine after the wedding. There are many human touches here. Rutledge, with his scheme for saving the city from the British, and Moultrie, impetuous and thickheaded, are fairly well done, particularly in the scene in which these two men, the civil and military heads, respectively, are deadlocked. But it passes credulity, I think, that Harry, wishing to test Myrtle's honor, should have imagined and told her as a lie what was the actual but very secret truth about the strategy by which Rutledge and Lincoln were conspiring to save Charleston. If the device — an almost unimaginable coincidence — provides strong scenes toward the end of the story, they are nevertheless scenes that are essentially empty and hollow, effective for a moment and forgotten very soon afterward. They explain nothing, they import nothing. And by their existence in Sabatini's work we are drawn back briefly to his remarks on the historical romance which I quoted at the beginning: "It is necessary that certain well defined limits should be set upon the license which writers" — of such romances — "are to enjoy. . . . Preparation should be made by a sound, painstaking study of the period to be represented, to the end that a true impression may first be formed, and then conveyed." *

* The whole passage is in the preface to *The Life of Cesare Borgia.*

But is Sabatini right in this? Let me suggest a comparison of what he says with the preface which Arnold Bennett wrote to later editions of "The Old Wives' Tale". Mr. Bennett — one of those realists of whom Sabatini is so fascistically intolerant — explains that in the course of constructing his masterly novel he discovered that the chronology of the story involved Paris at the time of the Siege, in 1871. Bennett says frankly that he has always hated research. Rather than dig in musty libraries, he lazily asked the two old French people with whom he lived if they remembered the Siege. The man, upon hearing the question, looked inquiringly at his wife. The old woman nodded. Then she explained that the price of everything had been terrifically high and there had been no meat — the menagerie in the Jardin des Plantes was slaughtered before the siege was raised. Whereupon, says Bennett, he suddenly saw that the Siege of Paris, to nine out of ten who went through it, was nothing but unheard of prices and dreadful inconvenience or even semi-starvation. But it was a glimpse! And the result is that the Paris of "The Old Wives' Tale" is absolutely real as you read. I submit that Bennett might have spent a year in "painstaking study of the period" without learning one thing as supremely valuable for his purpose as those two ancients taught him in ten minutes.

From 1913 to 1918 Sabatini was a director of the English publishing house of Martin Secker, Ltd. But otherwise his vacation from business has been permanent. During the war his skill in languages was at the service of the Intelligence Department of the British War Office. He has a son and a daughter, both nearly grown, and one of the pleasantest pictures of an author

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extant shows the four Sabatinis on skis on the snow in Switzerland. With the father and husband, fishing is even more popular. He now declares that he writes novels for recreation and that salmon fishing, in the Cumberland Derwent or elsewhere, is his life work. He devotes "enormous pains and labor" to every delicate stage of the proceeding, from dressing the fly to "the ultimate and occasional killing of the fish". He confesses to great vanity on this subject. "It leaves me cold that men should write better novels than mine. But I hate the man who can kill more fish."

Well, I care nothing for his prowess with fish, but at the close of an account embodying some pretty heavy strictures, of a friendly harshness, like good tweed or an agreeable tobacco, I should like to pay a tribute to his sportsmanlike quality in another direction. So far as his stories and histories are concerned, he is foursquare to the winds of criticism. He has done the one thing he wanted to do and has done it for its own sake through long years when it had to be done thus if it were done at all. And finally it has enriched him; the Black Shirt has entered Rome and has been made a literary Prime Minister.

Nothing will be the same for him any more; the zest inevitably departs; the money cascades in; and one does not grow younger. Alas for *la giovinezza;* but youth is glorious while it lasts and fifty is only the commencement of middle age. Perhaps! A tribute, then, to this much enduring Odysseus: Salute to Sabatini.

## TOP SPINNING

By Louise Ayres Garnett

IS the sky the world turned upside down?
And what do they do up there
Going about from spot to spot
On sidewalks made of air?

I wonder if they're wondering
How earth folk keep in place
Walking upon a giant top
That spins around in space.

If they should ever come to me
To talk the matter out
I'd say the Spinner of Our Top
Knows what he's about!

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# PROFESSOR MOFFATT RECREATES THE OLD TESTAMENT

## By Lynn Harold Hough

THERE is a memorable passage in the preface to Joseph Conrad's "The Nigger of the Narcissus". The great author who has so recently gone from us, after bending English words to his own purposes with such cool, clear power, is writing of this very sort of achievement. Literary art, he says, "must strenuously aspire to the plasticity of sculpture, to the colour of painting, and to the magic suggestiveness of music, which is the art of arts. And it is only through complete unswerving devotion to the perfect blending of form and substance; it is only through an unremitting, never discouraged care for the shape and ring of sentences that an approach can be made to plasticity, to colour, and that the light magic of suggestiveness may be brought to play for an evanescent instant over the commonplace surface of words; of the old, old words, worn thin, defaced by ages of careless usage."

Some such ideal as that commended and illustrated by these astonishing phrases of Joseph Conrad is naturally in the mind of the reader as he peruses any translation of the Old Testament or the New. For as a matter of fact, from the standpoint of literature the thing has already been done, and done with a kind of haunting perfection of beauty. The King James Version may not always be accurate, but it is always splendid. The worst the technical master of Hebrew critical discussion can say of it may be put into a sentence: "This is magnificent but it is not scholarship." And when the skilled technician has done his best and his worst, and the literary artist surveys the crass correctness of the result, he is likely to exclaim: "This may be scholarship but it is not magnificent."

You can turn, however, from the outburst of Joseph Conrad, each phrase edged about with little flames of lambent beauty, to the vast vitality of the King James Version, without any feeling that you are being let down to lower levels. The great awakening of the mind and taste of Europe lay just behind, and all the gracious loveliness of the Renaissance is like a background of mellow beauty behind the words which glow with all the energy of one of the commanding eras of human speech. The awakening of the conscience had taught men to use words as the swords of an ethical warfare, and the sudden unsheathing of weapons of moral passion, every blade with its own terrible cutting edge, made the authorized version a document where strength and grace, austerity and loveliness, met in high and holy wedlock. Indeed the King James Old Testament is a literary Mount Sinai with clouds and fire playing about the summit and the bright loveliness of fragrant flowers blooming in all the valleys. One William Shakespeare had been making his mind a mirror and his pen an interpreter of all the passion and pain and hope and fear of human life, in the very period which



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›roduced the authorized version. And he plays of Shakespeare and the King ames translation have the same high uality of authenticity and power and nastery in the use of words.

The Revised Version of 1881–1885 in England and the newly edited form of he same work in America in 1901 have heir own points of added accuracy. Speaking somewhere of Miles Coverlale, Professor George Saintsbury says, erhaps a touch too flippantly, "His rologue and other editorial matter cerainly seems to contain not a little of he peculiar music which has always een associated with the English Bible, nd which the revisers of a few years go showed an extraordinary ability in emoving whenever they had an opporunity."

So much for prolegomena.

Now for Professor Moffatt.

Nobody can deny that he can be raphic. Take this from that ancient nd famous song of Deborah:

t thine advance from Seir, O Eternal,
Jpon thy march from Edom's land,
arth was shaking,
he skies quaking,
louds dripped water,
nountains streamed,
n front of the Eternal, Israel's God.

Jot one shield for five towns then!
Jot a lance for Israel's forty thousand men!
3ut Israel had leaders — my heart goes out
to them —
olk who came forward!
3less the Eternal.

'ell of them, you on your tawny asses,
iding on your rugs,
nd you that tramp the roads!
'ar from the whizzing of arrows,
'here cattle are watered,
Men tell how the Eternal upholds the right,
pholds it for Israel's hamlets.

Or for sheer rugged brutal strength ake this from the same old war song:

3ut blest among women be Jael
lest above Bedawin women!
Vater he asked and milk she gave him,
rought him curds in a lordly bowl,
laid her hand upon a tent pin,
laid her right hand on a mallet,
and pounded Sisera, shattered his head,
smashed him, crashed his temple in;
he sank at her feet, he fell down dead,
And where he sank he fell — her victim.

It has been said that Professor Moffatt is one of the best read of men. And he knows church history. He knows Greek. He knows Hebrew. He has a sense of the music of words. And again and again he expresses the thought he has in mind in words with sharp edge and stinging impact. To be sure, only one of the two volumes of Old Testament translation has appeared, and the Psalms and the Prophets will really prove of what kidney Professor Moffatt is.

Some things, however, one can say already. The volume before us is not closely accurate in a sense which will give it rank as a great work of Old Testament scholarship. And its interpretations sway from flashing insight into older forms of life and thought to sudden astonishing pieces of modernity. In a sense it is neither fish nor fowl. Now Dr. Moffatt seems carried away by the understanding insight of a good scholar whose imagination lives in the life of a long vanished day. Now he picks a phrase which may have meaning on the streets of London or New York, but one which never had meaning on the streets of Jerusalem or Babylon. Sometimes he is quite unaccountable. The word "Eternal" so often used can hardly put forth a serious claim to Hebrew parentage. It is a sort of literary Melchizedek without any ancestry which can be traced. There are times when Professor Moffatt simply emasculates a great old passage, committing verbal assault and battery and leaving the victim with a face one would scarcely recognize. There are times when a telling and seminal phrase gives new life to a whole passage.

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One reads with interest, at times with fascination. Sometimes one reads with dislike. Always one reads with quickened mind. The light never seen on sea or land must have shone upon the translator. For clearly this is not the Old Testament as it was written. It is not the Old Testament created by devotion. It is not the Old Testament of a clear and dauntless scholarship. There is perhaps something of all of these. There is certainly not all of any of them.

"Old Fitz" did not really translate Omar Khayyam. He created a great poem for which the ancient Persian must admit a sort of shadowy fatherhood without personal volition. Similarly this translation is really Dr. Moffatt's book. It has passages of brilliant literary art ready to stand unashamed before the searching ideal of Conrad. It has passages not more noble or vital than lusty cries heard in the streets of a city. It is a little like a wonderful weathercock not always pointing in the same direction, but very brilliant and startlingly visible.

If one reads the King James Version for literary splendor, if one consults a scholarly commentary for purposes of accuracy, it will be most interesting to keep Dr. Moffatt's book on the table for the literary equivalent of an occasional electric shock. And once and again from its various and curious pages a living word full of illumination of a dark passage will break into the mind, and perchance at last find lodgment in the heart.

But as you sit in the great cathedral with its Gothic arches and its high and flaming music, it is a speech leaping from the heart of a living age that you want to hear. Once such speech united with the complete mastery of the then contemporary scholarship to make a great translation.

One wonders: will that sometime happen again?

## LAST SONG

By Dana Burnet

I WILL make a last song when I am old —
Out of the shining of remembered days,
Out of the sea's blue gaze,
And the sun's long backward glance of gold,

I will make a song of all the things I loved and knew,
So when my soul goes climbing up the blue,
To stand in the vast, strange, empty space before God's throne
I shall have still some keepsake of my own,
Some treasure to make bold my heart, when I face God, alone. . . .

Out of the sun's look, and the sea's voice, and the world's sweet breath,
I will make a song against the time of death!

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# THE NEW YORKER

*Five Adventures — A Modern "Vanity Fair" — The Theatre Guild Comes of Age — The Rediscovery of Pauline Lord — A Fashionable Show of Portraits — M. and Mme. Le Voisier Visit New York — A New Orchestral Conductor — Belated Laurels for Mr. Shaw and Mr. Congreve — The Biographer of the Irresistible Miss M. Goes Home.*

AT least five adventures occurred during the month which made life worth living, five glowing experiences, two of the past and three of present creation. They were encounters with a novel, a play, an actress, a great picture, and a poet.

"Some Do Not" is the book. It is a revelation of a man who for so many years existed in the public consciousness chiefly as the collaborator of Joseph Conrad. Suddenly, without a word, Ford Madox Ford (né Hueffer) publishes a book which is to our day what "Vanity Fair" was to the early days of Victoria's reign, a book that presents a picture of social life surpassed in poise, penetration, and literary excellence only by Thackeray's great novel. If it were buried now, to be dug up three hundred years hence, the men who dug it up would have an extraordinarily sound picture of the England of the past quarter century. They would know about it virtually all there is to know. And it is no prettier a picture than the "Vanity Fair" which shocked the homebodies of Victoria's neat kingdom. In an autumn remarkable for the wealth of good novels, "Some Do Not" surely stands high above most . . . a book that is built with a sense of form, one that tells a story admirably, one in which the characterization is excellent, and one which has that quality of all great novels — a sublimation of reality, and an inherent glamor that is quite beyond such labels as realism or romanticism.

It links, strangely enough, as a picture of modern society, with one of the other experiences, the first performance in many years of Congreve's "The Way of the World".

For a long time there has been growing a conviction that modern society, in its tone and point of view, has been returning to the gay and cynical mood of the Restoration . . . a time when ladies, in the proper sense of the word, called a spade a spade and caviled at no speech however broad, so long as it was witty. Between the two periods (this modern day of ours and the days that followed the return of the gay and worldly Stuarts) there is more than one likeness; both periods of relaxation, after long struggle and turmoil: both periods that followed the decline of morals that were straightlaced and priggish, the one Puritan, the other Victorian: both, in a sense, periods of good living, rich foods and wines. Consequently, both are periods not too much concerned with morals — times when the talk of men and women across a dinner table is much worse than their actual behavior. Certainly in the past twenty five years our own point of view is vastly changed. It is a realization brought sharply to mind recently by the revival of a comedy which is possibly the greatest ever written in English.



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Far down off Seventh Avenue, deeper in Avernus even than the Provincetown Players, a little group of actors and actresses recently turned loose their really ample talent upon this brilliant play. The result is an entertainment more completely satisfactory than anything offered among the mazda lights of Broadway and one that, as comedy, is far more sophisticated and up to date than any comedy of recent years. One beholds it, chortling, to think over and over again: "It is just the world of fashion today. Men and women behave much like this. It is all shocking but nevertheless very funny and very charming."

To be sure, there is no wit today like that of Congreve; or at least if there be such wit, it is not dressed in such sparkling raiment. "The Way of the World" is the best of the modern comedies; yet ten years ago it could not have been given without Bowdlerization.

The production is an able one for which much credit is due all concerned, especially the director Dennis Cleugh for his amazing reconstruction of the brittle Restoration artificialities. Gertrude Bryan, in the rôle of Millamant, lacks perhaps a little of the gusto which belongs properly to that breezy minx, but Auriol Lee as Mrs. Marwood is superb, having had the advantage to be sure of a long successful run which the play had last season in London. And Mrs. Hassell, who left us many years ago to become the mother of a London Gaiety Girl and the grandmother of a peer, returns magnificently to our stage as Lady Wishfort. It is indeed difficult to find anything but praise for the entire cast. Costumes, settings, everything is excellently done . . . perhaps with more skill and taste than Broadway might have given.

One leaves the theatre thinking, "We talk about Marcel Proust and Freud and the behaviorism of our friends today, but after all the point of view is the same cynical one, careless, even a little malicious, all sounding much worse than it really is."

It may be that those actors in Cherry Lane have drawn encouragement from the spectacle of another theatre which began quite as modestly and only recently passed a milestone of brilliant achievement by laying the cornerstone of what may prove to be the Théâtre Français of America. The ceremony took place on a frigid day with a gale blowing hats and coats in all directions but despite these disadvantages the skeleton of the new Guild Theatre was filled to capacity by an audience which held its feet off the concrete floor to keep them from actually freezing. Altogether it was an event. In the flag-draped box sat the invincible group which nearly six years ago started the Theatre Guild upon a precarious existence . . . that is to say Theresa Helburn, Helen Westley, Maurice Wertheim, Lawrence Langner, and Philip Moeller. Near them sat Otto Kahn that good angel of the American theatre who will go down in history as the Lorenzo the Magnificent of these times John H. Finley of the New York "Times", and last but not least Alfred E. Smith, the adored Governor, who was heralded by a band which played "East Side, West Side, All Around the Town" while the audience burst into cheers. Before the dais sat grouped the cream of the American actors and actresses, with just the proper proportions of critics, and behind them the citizens whose bonds have built the new theatre. Altogether it was as well managed as the best of the Guild productions. Enthusiasm conquered the cold. It was, as it should have been, a democratic occasion, for this

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organization is supported neither upon the nursing bottle of private endowment nor the stuffy artificial food of government subsidy. It is a healthy institution, supported by the public and acclaimed by it, quite able to stand upon its own legs. The cornerstone laying was an event which may well become historic in the annals of American art.

At almost the same moment, in the Garrick Theatre where the Guild was born, there came to light an excellent new comedy, superbly staged and acted, by Sidney Howard who, everyone has known for a long time, is a young man of great talent. The play is called "They Knew What They Wanted", and in the leading feminine rôle Pauline Lord gave a performance seldom equaled in the modern theatre. The critics all behaved as if she had not acted just as brilliantly in other plays, even so far back as "Samson and Delilah", an abominable play in which her perfection was obscured to many eyes by the neurotics of a Yiddish actor named Ben-Ami (since disappeared). The play, it must be said, has certain moments when there is evidence of padding, but so brilliantly is it staged and acted that these are hidden, only to reveal themselves in the cold grey dawn of the morning after, when one decides that all was not what it seemed. Nevertheless it is a fine play and, above all, an American play. In it Glenn Anders and Richard Bennett cover themselves with glory. Indeed, if Miss Lord could be kept off the stage the audience might well cheer this pair; but Miss Lord has an unearthly gift of reality that makes other actors seem inevitably of the theatre.

The month also witnessed the New York production of "Madame Pompadour", an operetta by Leo Fall which had met with great success in Europe. Something went wrong in New York. The music was charming, the settings and costumes beautiful, but with the cast all was not well. Perhaps the legend of Madame Pompadour is too great and glamorous; perhaps Wilda Bennett, who played the title rôle, had not the proper number of rehearsals. Whatever happened, one lacked the romantic sense of being present at Versailles in

THE DRAMA SHELF

*"Representative Plays" by Henry Arthur Jones (Little, Brown). His most famous plays are in volume three, but there are good ones in all four volumes.*

*"The Flattering Word" by George Kelly (Little, Brown). Amusing skits, one of them concerned with the same characters as those in the author's current and successful "Show-Off".*

*"The Living Drama" by Nellie Burget Miller (Century). The chairman of literature of the General Federation of Women's Clubs offers a text for drama study.*

*"Charles Lamb" by Alice Brown (Macmillan). A delicate, fanciful, moving interpretation of this genial yet tragic figure in literature.*

*"The Dark Hours" by Don Marquis (Doubleday, Page). A dignified, extraordinarily beautiful retelling in drama form of the story of Christ's death, magnificently conceived and written.*

*"Six Plays" by Rachel Lyman Field (Scribner). Among the most charming and actable of plays for the small theatre.*

*"Gas" by Georg Kaiser (Small, Maynard). Another play of fantasy and horror and social problems by the author of "From Morn to Midnight".*

*"Modern Plays" by Frederick Houk Law (Century). A rather unusual anthology of plays short and long, well prepared for classroom study.*

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the days of Louis. One never got beyond a musical show in Eighth Avenue and Forty Fifth street. It was a good show, but they never should have aroused false hopes by calling it "Madame Pompadour".

In a piece called "The Harem" by Ernst Vajda, whose plays have been snapped up like hotcakes since the Theatre Guild made a success of "Fata Morgana" (which doubtless an astute Broadway manager would have translated as "The Morganatic Mistress"), Lenore Ulric returned to give an excellent and wicked performance. The plot, roughly speaking, is that of "The Guardsman" reversed. A wife disguises herself and becomes the object of her husband's passionate love in his belief that she is another woman. But Vajda goes at the thing from the wrong angle. Molnar never pretends that his hero is fooling anyone, even the wife herself. It is all a joke, no matter how you look at it. Vajda asks you to believe in the preposterous idea, and the play, one can't help thinking, has not been improved by the tampering of its adapter Avery Hopwood, exploiter of the bedroom farce idea. The Hopwood lines stick out like so many sore thumbs. Still Miss Ulric gives a spirited performance which, in the first act at least, is worth the price of admission. She is unique in her line. Otherwise the cast is not much.

Among the other plays were two which are part of the innumerable offspring of Frank Craven's "The First Year". One, called "New Brooms", is by Mr. Craven himself, and the other, "Close Harmony", is by that amusing wit Dorothy Parker. Both are good, but if one goes often enough to the theatre in New York there comes a moment when one more play of middle class life is simply too much. There have been too many of them. The reaction is rapid in the direction of wicked duchesses, ambassadors, and "sassiety" women gowned by Worth and Lanvin.

In the opposite direction from the plays of this category lies the exhibition of portraits which Jacques Seligmann has collected for charity, an exhibition singularly wide and representative of the day. It includes more than forty examples of the work of modern portrait painters ranging from George Luks to John Sargent, and Alfred Munnings to Ignacio Zuloaga. Some are, of course, bad examples; particularly the Sargent portrait of Mrs. Phipps and Winston, which is almost bad enough to be a Shannon, R. A. Munnings is the man who came here from England recently to paint horses and incidentally their owners. He is perhaps the greatest in this field since the early nineteenth century and it is a pleasure to think that he has left behind him in this country so many examples of his work. He was one of the horde which followed in the train of the Prince of Wales on the recent visit of his Highness.

The pictures are all those of wealthy and fashionable subjects; among them the work of Sir William Orpen in the portraits of W. Goadby Loew and the late Henry P. Davison are superb examples of a fine meeting of subject and method.

In a room crowded with Latin-Americans speaking bad French, the Wildenstein Galleries exhibited for the first time in this country the work of Federico Beltran-Massés, whose praises are sung in an accompanying circular quoting several French critics as only Frenchmen on a critical *pique-nique* can sing. They are extravagant. "From a visual classical point of view the work is dazzling; from an intellectual, poetical, lyrical one, it is exaltation." But it isn't. Some of it is just

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bad, but bad enough that M. Beltran-Massés will, no doubt, receive scores of commissions from American women who fancy there is a Spanish "something" about them.

Yet belowstairs at the Wildenstein here is a reward. No one tells you of it. It occupies a room to itself, as is quite fitting, and stands alone in solitary glory as one of the great pictures of the world should stand. It is Gerard David's portrait of M. and Mme. Le Voisier — an enormous canvas with the figures of the subjects painted in life size. To those who know only the battle pictures of David that adorn (dubiously) the Louvre, this double portrait is a revelation. It is a picture by a painter who had set out to paint with all his heart; a picture that, if it were not so great, might be a *tour de force* or a bit of virtuosity; for the artist has shown what a fine artist can do. He has combined difficulties, any one of which might bring calamity to an average modern painter. He has painted wood, crimson velvet, a glass retort (for the Voisier was the father of chemistry), hair, and a voluminous muslin dress, with a technical perfection that is breath taking. One might go on and on discussing the picture. There is but one thing to do — see it oneself.

At the Arden Galleries there is a collection of water colors by a group known as The Six, which are in many respects remarkable. The group includes Marion Monks Chase, Carl Gordon Cutler, John Goss, Charles Hopkinson, Charles Hovey Pepper, and Harley Perkins. They have chosen a variety of subjects; in painting them Mrs. Chase has been, perhaps, the most successful, by reason of her vigor and strong individuality and sense of design.

Musically the month brought a not very interesting new opera called "Jenufa" by the Bohemian composer Leo Janacek, with Maria Jeritza giving a fine performance in the title rôle. It adds nothing one way or another to the Metropolitan repertoire and will disappear doubtless into the limbo to which "Die Tote Stadt" and the absurd "Lorelei" have long since been consigned.

At the first concert of the International Composers' Guild, Eugene Goossens, one of the leaders among the younger British composers, conducted before an audience made up of modernists and those who pursue that which is the latest, a first performance of his "Fantasy for Wind Instruments". Ursula Greville, a fine singer with none too fine a voice, was the soloist. The program included a wide range of musical experiments, some interesting, a few beautiful, and all very exciting, by Carl Ruggles, R. Vaughan Williams, Egon Wellesz, Felix White, and others who have wearied of old forms and old manners. The evening passed quietly and without disorder.

Among the many benefits which we in America have reaped by the Russian Revolution and the shift of gold from Europe to Wall Street, is the acquisition of Sergei Koussevitsky, who has come to take over the Boston Symphony and, to all purposes, set it back once more on the solid footing it occupied during the days of the *schrecklicher* Karl Muck. At his first concert in New York Koussevitsky was received with such cheers as made the reception of Mengelberg pale in comparison. He is a fine musician, a man of intelligence, and a conductor extraordinary. It is to be hoped that he will not return to Europe.

Second only in excellence to "The Way of the World" was the revival of "Candida" which, sponsored by the Actors' Theatre, began a career of

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special matinées on the eve of our going to press. It is shrewdly cast and directed by Dudley Digges, who chose for the title rôle Katharine Cornell. Her performance is one of amazing simplicity and charm. It is as if she gathered the whole play and the characters in it into her understanding arms. One doubts whether "Candida" has ever been so well done before, even for the pleasure of those who remember Edwin Booth and Mrs. Siddons. As Prossy, Clare Eames reaps as much glory as her husband, the clever Mr. Howard, achieved in Thirty Fifth street at the première of "They Knew What They Wanted". Miss Eames gives a performance which in the scene with Marchbanks is nothing short of breathless. In the rôle of Burgess, Ernest Cossart is, as always, excellent. Certainly he ranks among the pillars of the American theatre. He is one actor who does not exploit his own personality. The play, with exceeding wisdom, is costumed in the period ascribed to it by the elderly vegetarian author; that is to say, 1892. The gain is enormous, because "Candida", despite certain epic touches, is not a modern comedy. Socialism has been hung up in the closet, and political reform at the hands of clergymen is becoming frayed from long and somewhat idle usage.

The two best comedies of the yea are old ones, of which Mr. Shaw bega one and Mr. Congreve the other.

It is impossible to pass the montl without a word for Walter de la Mare who has returned to England after a flying visit on which he lectured befor a half dozen American universities It was a cheering spectacle to see thi splendid poet, philosopher, and novelis who for so many years sat as a humbl clerk in a London office, coming at las into the popularity and recognitio which have been so long overdue. H is as charming a man as he is fine poe . . . small in physique, gentle, humor ous, witty, and with a pair of eye such as belong only to those who knov the elves and sprites, or to a man wh knew so well the fragile and delicat beauty of mind and spirit that wa Miss M. in the incomparable "Mem oirs of a Midget". Few lecturers ou of the swarms that have come to thi country from England have been s popular, and none has made so littl effort to achieve popularity. It wa impossible to resist him. Also, it mus be added that in his lectures he mad sense.

LOUIS BROMFIELD

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# ON THE TRAIL OF THE BAD MEN*

## By Arthur Train

### DEDICATION

*TO any lawyer*
*who buys this book*
*it is*
*affectionately dedicated*
*by the author.*

### REVIEW

BOILER plate review furnished with each free copy.

(For the convenience of newspaper and other critics who have not the time to read this book the author has prepared and herewith supplies the following review — which may be used without conscientious objection or acknowledgment.)

Suggestion for layout:

Halftone of author clad and posed as Rodin's Penseur. Post prepaid 98c.
(Or, in cities of over 8,000 inhabitants, as Pan, wearing chaps, sombrero, and playing upon a piano-keyed accordion. Post prepaid $1.36.)

Run under head of

AMOUS AUTHOR LAYS BARE
SECRETS OF THE PRISON HOUSE

Or

CAN A LAWYER LAUGH? WE'LL SAY HE CAN!

It is difficult in the ordinary space accorded to the reviewer to do justice to the latest literary effort of America's most celebrated author-lawyer ("On the Trail of the Bad Men", New York, Chas. Scriber's Sons, $2.50 net+ht−.02÷Mar. 25 +++). Let it be said at once that it is the ripe product of a half century of keen observation coupled with a profound knowledge of human nature and a philosophic appreciation, not only of the fundamental principles of jurisprudence, but of life. In the title essay the author exhibits a gift of humor totally unsuspected by those familiar only with his weightier works, while, with characteristic versatility he displays in the subsequent chapters a "giant grasp of universal truth" and a lofty and stimulating idealism rarely equaled by one of his calling. In this comprehensive work, dealing as it does with every known variety of bad men, bad women, bad beasts, bad birds, and bad bugs, Mr. Train has produced the most valuable, erudite, and diverting contribution to popular legal bibliography ever made by a reformed lawyer.

Originally planned for private circulation only, it became a best seller three months before publication and is now in its eighty seventh impression. It is enough to state that an illuminated copy, hermetically sealed in reenforced concrete, was recently buried in front of the Columbia University Library in the presence of the entire faculty with appropriate ceremonies including a few short and ugly words by President Nicholas Murray Butler. A special edition printed upon asbestos paper has been prepared for the use of law schools. Boston, Philadelphia, and Linoleumville papers please copy. — *Adv.*

### TITLE PAGE

*KNOW ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law), how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?*
**Romans 7:1**

* A preface by Mr. Train to his forthcoming book on law, lawyers, and other vagaries of justice.



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## PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

### *The Legal Ignis Fatuous*

*The strength of sin is the law.*
I Corinthians 15:56

IT had been my intention to suffer the publication of this treatise without alteration in the original text, or any supererogatory comment of my own, however valuable, but a casual inspection of the proof sheets, induced by a congenital abhorrence of misplaced commas, disclosed a paradoxical and Titanic omission.

I had, as my reviewer so flatteringly points out, written a supposedly exhaustive opus upon bad men, bad laws, upon women good and bad, bad beasts, including dogs, pigs, cows, cocks, cats, rats, lice, leeches, and other vermin, even upon malignly disposed physical objects; but for some extraordinary reason, in my fulminations against bad men and things in general, I had somehow overlooked the most notorious bad men of all — to wit, the lawyers themselves — the class to which I myself once belonged by birth, education, and evil inclination, and among whom for so many years I had lived and moved and earned a dishonest living. "For I was alive without the law once." (Romans 7:9.)

That so exhaustive, not to say such a monumental work, should be given to posterity with so obvious a defect is unthinkable, and indeed, now that the matter has been called to my notice, I shall be glad to take this opportunity to tell a waiting world what I think of law and lawyers.

It was my natal misfortune to arrive in Boston at a period when all male children were thought ordained of God to be either lawyers or obstetricians. There may have been other legitimate occupations in those days but they were not brought to my attention, and, since there were as yet no telephones the telephone directory had not bee classified.

Every morning, at exactly twenty nine minutes past eight, my fathe opened the door of our house at 22 Marlborough Street and descended th short flight of steps from what wa called "the vestibule", carrying in hi right hand a bag of green baize sup posed by the uninitiated to contain im portant documents, such as wills leases, deeds, contracts *et al.* (it will b observed that the Devil's Habit is stil strong in me), and started walking to ward the gilded dome of the Stat House. Coincidently, simultaneously their movements accurately synchro nized, every alternate door on the sam street opened to allow the owner, les see, or occupant likewise to appea holding a similar bag of green baize Even when primarily concerned witl the quality of my Walker-Gordon milk I was never fooled by any of these ras cals. My father's bag had no vita papers in it. It held merely a heavy leather case containing a fistful of horri ble black cigars and a copy of "Puck" I had tasted the cigars.

Like all others of my sex and gener ation not destined to midwifery, I wa brought up to believe that only throug the law could I attain economic an social salvation, and in pursuance o that delusion I spent some eleve precious years in being "fitted" for th bar — that is to say I attended variou football games and "beer nights" an incidentally read, marked, and go mental indigestion from several thou sand so called cases as compiled b divers learned professors. "The lav having a shadow of good things t come." (Hebrews 10:1.) Thus afte working perhaps two hours per diem fo three years and after being tutored b a highly paid coach, who was much to

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wise to bother himself with the practice of his legitimate profession, I managed to pass my law school and later my bar examinations, and became thereby entitled to call myself a bachelor of laws.

I had, it must be confessed — in open disregard of the adjuration not to "drink and forget the law" contained in Proverbs 31:5 — nearly got rooked and thereby blighted a promising career. For in a moment of frivolity induced by a modicum of alcoholic stimulant I had answered the vital question of, "Give an example of the ownership of an animal in common", by the illuminating statement that the only recorded instance of such ownership of an animal in common was to be found in Mark Twain's "Pudd'nhead Wilson", in which the hero remarks that he wishes he owned half of a certain yellow dog "'cause if he did he'd shoot his half". I was later informed that only by the grace of Blackstone and my extraordinary familiarity with the mysterious doctrine of *Cy Pres* had I been saved from the outermost darkness of the pit.

But from this incident it should not be inferred that I took the law lightly. I merely took it easily. And doubtless it was this circumstance that enabled me at a later age to discard the advocate's robe so gracefully. "For through the law am I dead to the law." (Galatians 1:19.) Yea, dead and buried, although risen again in the guise of a man of letters and with a posthumous reputation as a lawyer which I never had in life and which I certainly never deserved!

I suppose in fairness to the profession as a whole I should at once confess that I was engaged in the worse side of it — that of litigation — and that I did not find it spiritually improving. For twenty five years, in company with a miserable minority of the other fifteen thousand lawyers in the City of New York, which affords more carrion upon which the legal vulture may feed fat than all the rest of America combined, I lived upon the crimes and weaknesses, economic disasters, and sexual entanglements of my fellow men until I had learned to look upon anyone not involved or at least involvable in legal complications much as does the medico to whom a sound and healthy human being seems a total loss. "Woe unto you also ye lawyers! For ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers."

Nevertheless I had a burden, and a grievous one, which was my inability as a lawyer to express my own mind, and the fact that I was rapidly losing whatever individuality I had ever possessed; was in short becoming a mere composite or echo of all the other lawyers who had lived before me, even from the beginning of the world. For how can it be otherwise with us unfortunates, when we are not permitted to decide any point upon its real merits, or as gentlemen and sportsmen, when we cannot advise our clients according to the standards of ethics, morals, or even "justice", but must, irrespective of the common sense of the matter, perforce be bound by the idiosyncratic decision of some irascible bigwig several hundred years gone by, which has kept on growing like a legal stalactite and upon which our misfortune is about to crystallize as the final drop?

In all other professions anything in the nature of a discovery is greeted with applause or at least accorded the compliment of jealousy. Not so in the law! No lawyer ever yet arose before a bench of judges to say: "Your honors, it is my privilege to lay before you an entirely new idea!" No lawyer, even if he has an idea, ever has the temerity

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to disclose the fact. Should he do so he would instantly be hailed as a lunatic. Instead, he arises, coughs deprecatingly, and murmurs: "As your honors are well aware, this point was definitely settled in Snooks vs. Mooks, 1 Ass. 639, which has been followed ever since by a long line of authorities with which you are all perfectly familiar."

Whereupon his opponent gets up and says: "My learned brother has entirely misconstrued Snooks vs. Mooks which was long ago overruled by the dictum of Lord Chief Justice Squabble in Bellow vs. Bawl and has not the slightest application. The controlling authority here is Shadrach vs. Abednego, 91 Babylonian Reports 273."

Of course it is much easier to make Snooks, Mooks, Shadrach, and Abednego work for us than to use our own brains, but the fact of the matter is that we lawyers pay the penalty by being forced to conceal, at the greatest personal discomfort, whatever originality we may have been born with. Bernard Shaw would make a great lawyer — but he never would get a judge to listen to him. We lawyers have all of us labored under the curse of a vicarious solemnity for a thousand years. Is it surprising that we often appear inhuman when we have lost by attrition at least half our human qualities?

In order to satisfy his client's requirements a lawyer must conceal all his natural high spirits, imagination, and interest in the lighter and more agreeable side of life. He must seem to be immersed in the profundity of his own vacuity. For once a client perceives a gleam of humor in a lawyer's eye or learns that he does cross word puzzles, he vanishes through the outer door. Hence, from the suppression of our ordinary instincts we lawyers become cautious, taciturn, and unenthusiastic. We learn early in the game that what a man doesn't say can't hur him — except to give him indigestion And can we be blamed for being fear ful lest some unexpected dictum aris to flout us in the jaw?

Yet, paradoxical as it may seem while professional caution induces in u lawyers a chronic verbal repression once give us paper and ink and we be come utterly abandoned. Now at las we can make up for all those hour when with lips tightly compressed w have let the other fellow talk. And be cause we are lawyers first and huma beings afterward, we can hardly b expected even in moments of literar ecstasy to discard the jargon of ou profession — that "lawyers' cant' which, as Bentham said, "serves them at every word, to remind them of tha common interest by which they ar made friends to one another, enemie to the rest of mankind".

As the reader has already discovere from perusing this preface, a lawye makes the worst author in the world — if for no other reason than that he ha become so habituated to the artificial ity, the obsolete phraseology, the re dundancy and reiteration of the lega vocabulary, that he could not escap from them if he would. A lawyer i almost as tautological as a cuckoo clock.

So that it is really not the lawyer' fault if in these modern days, with a cigar in his mouth and a helpless stenographer chained on the opposite side of the desk, he sits and discharges a flux of meaningless and useless words that fill page upon page of banker's bond and bring confusion to the brain of the sanest client. For subconsciously that is his purpose. Things should not be made too simple, or what credit would there be in straightening them out? Put in a sufficient number of saids, aforesaids, hereinafters and be-

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fores, *sics*, *et seq.s*, *supras*, *infras*, *et al.s*, and whereases — and how the dog crossed the road becomes the very devil of an affair.

But that is only one of the many devices employed by lawyers under what Bentham calls "the fee gathering system for promoting the ends of established judicature at the expense of the ends of justice":

> Every sham science, of which there are so many, makes to itself a jargon, to serve for a cover to its nothingness, and, if wicked, to its wickedness: Alchemy, palmistry, magic, judicial astrology, technical jurisprudence. The object and use of language is to convey information: information which, in some way or other, shall be of use: for which purpose, it must be true. The object and use of lawyers' language is twofold: partly to prevent information from being conveyed to certain descriptions of persons: partly to cause such information to be conveyed to them as shall be false, or at any rate fallacious: to secure habitual ignorance or produce occasional misconception. Misconception, as will be seen, is on those occasions a sort of improvement upon ignorance: all the purposes of ignorance are served by it, but in a more exquisite degree. . . .

I cannot improve upon that!

The situation has not changed for the better since Bentham's time. "Woe unto you lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."

This surely is bad enough, but the true horror of it becomes apparent only when we consider that under our system of jurisprudence it is the worst and not the best form of expression which is approved and perpetuated, becoming an unalterable precedent for all time to come. It is brought about in this way. Some learned judge delivers a charge so bad as to give hope to the lawyer upon the losing side that by appealing the case he may secure a reversal. So he prints the charge in his brief and argues the point before the judges of the Court of Appeals, who, after thinking it over, say in effect: "Well, it is true that our learned brother's charge down below was pretty damn rotten, but although it was almost bad it wasn't absolutely bad, and on the whole we guess we'll let matters stand as they are."

Now behold what happens! This charge was as bad as it could be without being actually reversible: yet, having been approved by the pundits of Albany, it becomes a model for the bench at large; hence much of the law given to our juries is the worst law that can be found and yet be law at all.

And this same thing is true of the phraseology of many legal documents — only the worst are likely to receive the official approbation. For if a lawyer sits down and writes a will or a deed or a contract that is perfectly plain and simple, nobody ever hears of it, whereas if he be a dunderhead and fill his pages with a lot of hocuspocus and technical legal jargon which nobody can understand, it is carried up for interpretation to some learned tribunal in order that the interested parties, including the lawyer who drew it, can be told what it is all about. And the court having finally declared that all this rigmarole really means that John killed James with an ax, or that Peter has agreed to sell Paul his corner lot, or that Uncle Thomas intended by all his saids, aforesaids, whereases and hereinafters and befores to leave a hundred dollars to his brother William's child — now, therefore, and because of this, to wit, James and Peter and Uncle Thomas must needs go on for all eternity, killing and selling and devising with ten words instead of one and with sentences which run all around Robin Hood's barn instead of going straight in at the door.

This peripatetic and plethoric voluminosity of expression has left its

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curse upon all our circumlocutory brotherhood. Granted that one of us is daredevil enough to chance committing himself on some trifling matter, he will quickly lose himself in the forest of his own verbiage and be floundering there long after you are in bed and asleep.

A lawyer who spends most of his time in court is apt to delude himself into the belief that to be constantly arguing about things is amusing to other people. He enjoys it, why shouldn't everybody else? These so called "trial lawyers" — of which I was one — are well named, for they are sore trials to their families. Needless to say they make the worst husbands in the world, for they are irritable, caustic, grouchy, cantankerous, and ill mannered, insisting upon quarreling over the most inconsequential matters, demanding a "yes or no" answer when nobody cares a damn one way or the other, hammering at and refusing to drop a subject until they have forced an admission of their correctness or driven everybody else out of the room. They do not allow their wives enough money and they cross examine them and their offspring as to where they have been and what they have been doing, until the poor things have no escape except by prevarication or homicide.

I have even heard uninformed and evil minded people assert that by the time a lawyer has reached the age of forty five, he is either a millionaire, a jailbird, or a mummy. This of course is a libel, but I admit that most of us die of hardening of the arteries. We are never hanged. We reserve that final experience for our clients.

Had some wise person explained all this to me when I was young, it would not have taken me twenty five years to find it out by myself. But at length like Saul — and at about the same age — I saw a great light and I gave up persecuting the innocent people who had been the victims of my cupidity, egotism, verbosity, and bad manners. Thereafter, as the prophet Jeremiah remarks, "they that handle the law knew me not." But it is too late for me to make compensation to those I have robbed, or amends to those whose feelings I have hurt by my needless severity and hardness of heart. It shall not be said of me in the language of the Proverbs that "they that forsake the law praise the wicked." I do not praise the wicked. It is not my custom to eulogize the bad men upon whose trail I am set. No, I only plead that in the case of many of them — including lawyers — there are extenuating circumstances arising out of the very nature of their badness. As for myself I can only apologize to the multitude of kindly folk whose feelings I have hurt and endeavor to counteract the evil I have done by an exaggerated amiability for the rest of my life.

"Nay", to quote again from high authority, "I had not known sin, but by the law."

HISTORICAL NOTE: *After writing the foregoing I immediately resigned from the Association of the Bar. But, to my great surprise, that august body refused to take my resignation seriously. I am wondering if they would have pursued the same course had they first read this preface.*

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# GETTING INTO SIX FIGURES

## By Arnold Patrick

### III: MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

FEW writers have the satisfaction of knowing that they are composing books to supply an actual, articulate demand. When Mary Roberts Rinehart wrote her latest story, "The Red Lamp", it was in response to some thousands of letters which have come to her in the last year requesting "another mystery story". So, although she perhaps preferred to write the novel of Washington society she was already planning, she brought instead a maturing technique to the type of story of which she has always been a master. I have read proofs of "The Red Lamp" and it is a magnificent piece of work. It has character, humor, adventure, mystery, and originality of method. It is by far the best of her mystery tales. When I saw Mrs. Rinehart the other day in Washington she was preparing the first draft of a love story, although the latest novel had been finished only a few weeks and she had already, besides, recreated "Tish" for another adventure. I do not want to give the impression that Mrs. Rinehart works over-rapidly. She simply works constantly and hard. She is one of the most careful technicians among writers and has been known to rewrite a story or a novel two, three, even four times. Her success as a writer is assured; she repeats it again and again. Yet each time that she creates a fine book its quality is secured by hard work, not by chance or luck — by the exercise of the old but unfailing combination, genius and perseverance.

The first rule for a successful author, as enunciated by Mrs. Rinehart, is "to be more interested in your characters than you are in yourself", which seems a pretty good rule; and her first rule of life is, obviously, duty to and love of family. This she has shown in her living and in her statements of life's philosophy. In an article in "The American Magazine" she once said:

> Now and then, however, comes a time when it is flatly the family or my work. Every woman of the many who are carving out careers for themselves, whether it be on the stage or the concert platform, or in a small way in a salaried position, knows what this is. It never happens to the man. His work is always first. And he cannot always understand the woman's struggle. Because with her it is a matter of conscience. She may be able to employ skillful people to take her place in the home. She may install a housekeeper and a trained nurse. Always, if she be a true woman, there is going on in her the struggle. Perhaps in a few years, it will be the accepted thing to consider that, having brought her children into the world, a mother may then pursue a gainful occupation without further serious responsibility for them. I hope not, but I fear it is coming.

Of late years, Dr. and Mrs. Rinehart have been living in Washington, where they have purchased and rebuilt a home far out on Massachusetts Avenue. There, in her upstairs sitting room with its hangings of pale green and lavender, the novelist received me the other day. She had been ill, but her dark eyes were sparkling, she was vivacious, kindly, beautiful. She had probably not chosen her soft lavender morning gown to match the room — but it did. Her



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real workroom, she assured me, was on the top floor, along with the boys' suite! In her boudoir, however, were the yellow papers, evidence of work, and on the first floor was a large room with an imposing desk, pictures from her plays, autographed photographs, cover designs of books.

"Where does your mother work?" I asked her son. He laughed.

"Everywhere, anywhere", he answered. "But she has only one fountain pen. She gets used to it. You can imagine the difficulties of having three or four places to work and only one instrument of work, can't you? Someone, everyone, herself — always looking for the pen!"

It is difficult to *interview* Mrs. Rinehart in the conventional sense of the word, because she puts you so quickly at your ease that you soon forget she is the famous novelist, and remember only that she is a charming hostess, mother of your friend, anxious because he is going on a hunting trip, interested in talking of new books and plays, of a coming trip to Europe — a sane and entertaining woman. Anne Hard recently wrote an editorial on her that gives a remarkably clear picture. I am going to quote a part:

> Mary Roberts Rinehart is more than merely "good-looking". She is handsome. She is handsome in a cool and unoppressive way. She has clean, fine features unobscured by fatty tissue, and expressive eyes which she does not work overtime, and a clear complexion unspoiled by the current drifts of cosmetics. Women like well dressed women and she is always well dressed. And more, she is always "turned-out", always "soigne".
>
> She listens well. She talks well without trying to seem clever. She never seeks the cheap wit of the uncharitable, nor the easy smartness of the cynical. The assurance of accomplishment gives her repose of manner just as her mental alertness gives her vividness without fidgeting.
>
> Her house in Washington is like dozens of others in its conventional arrangement and decors. Only the tightly packed books are unusual in their number. There are no "artistic effects" and even the lamb-like husband is wanting. He is wanting, and in his stead is a genial gentleman, a competent scientist, a charming person. Not Mary Roberts Rinehart, the Successful Authoress, but Dr. and Mrs. Stanley Rinehart receive you.

It has often been said of women writers that they must be well started along literary lanes before the gate of marriage confronts them. In Mrs. Rinehart's case this was not entirely true. Although at the age of fourteen she had sold her first short story for one dollar to a Pittsburg paper, her real work of writing did not commence until after her three boys were in the process of growing up. Before that time her life had been normal, but filled with incident. It is easy to trace her various qualities to ancestral traits. Her father's family were, for the most part, ministers of the gospel, and from Virginia. From them came her quick mind, her vivid imagination. That imagination has many facets, but one stands out especially: the almost scientific way in which she approaches the technique of writing. In that characteristic is seen the inventor father; for Mr. Roberts devised the rotary shuttle on which is based the mechanics of our modern weaving system. Her mother's folk were quiet English people. From them come her sanity and domestic vision.

Her girlhood in Pittsburg was marked by an eagerness and determination which were considered most "modern". She was, for example, the first girl in Pittsburg to ride a bicycle. Much time was spent in studying music. She seldom plays now; but her sons tell me that once or twice a year they lure her to a piano and that she can still pick up Chopin or Beethoven and read it with ease. The diet of books which was recommended by her

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family was that of the nineteenth century, good reading all; chiefly, she will tell you, Dickens. A love of Dickens has persisted; but of all books Pepys's Diary is probably her favorite. She carries it about with her, and may often be found reading it and chuckling to herself. Of modern authors, she is fondest of Maurice Hewlett.

When her father died she felt that she must not depend upon her mother, that she must have a career of her own. So at seventeen she decided to become a nurse. She went for advice to Dr. Willard, the old family physician. Dr. Willard was away on a vacation, but in his office she found instead a substitute — Stanley M. Rinehart. Young Dr. Rinehart advised against nursing, which was not so usual a career for young ladies of good family in those days as it is now. He emphasized the difficulties of the career. Miss Roberts, refusing to be discouraged, persisted in taking the course. Dr. Rinehart, however, had other advice to give, and before she was graduated their engagement had been announced. They were married shortly after her graduation.

The story of Mrs. Rinehart's writing career has been told many times. Robert H. Davis of "Munsey's" bought her first story, was a constant adviser and gave her much encouragement. She worked hard at her writing, all the while taking care of the three children. Her nursing training was not wasted. She saved young Ted's life when he swallowed carbolic acid by knowing an antidote, vinegar, and giving it to him at once. She nursed another boy through diphtheria, then was stricken with it herself. She has had more than her share of sickness; but she meets it with resiliency and works in spite of it. Her first novel was composed with a baby on her knee. "The Street of Seven Stars" was written on a washstand in a cold room in Vienna. Mrs. Rinehart taught herself that one of the essentials for him who would succeed in writing is to be able to sit down to work whenever the time is available. This is one of the things that has made it possible for her to combine family life with the duties of a career. To the training of the boys Dr. Rinehart and she both gave liberally of their time, the doctor as freely as an exacting profession allowed.

"Our family life, as I look back on it, meant three things to me," one of the boys told me the other day, "music, books, sport — Mother and Father singing with us, reading to us, giving us the books that we should read, Father teaching us to play baseball, skate, fly a kite, Mother and Father walking with us." In his memory, his mother's writing, his father's medical duties, do not obtrude. It was the family first always — walking trips, camping trips, travels here and abroad. Aiding in this double effort, family and work, were two characteristics: enthusiastic confidence and stern determination. I have heard Mrs. Rinehart tell two anecdotes that illustrate these two qualities — the story of how she sold her first play, and of a fish she caught in Wyoming.

One night she saw a play that seemed to her very poor. The audience, however, was amused. "Why can't I write a play?" she said to herself. In an incredibly short time she had completed a manuscript and had made up her mind to show it to David Belasco. She left Pittsburg for New York with her play, thoroughly confident that Mr. Belasco would like it. First she asked Robert Davis's advice. He smiled. Belasco read her play? He would give her a letter of introduction to an assistant. No, she was determined it should be

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Mr. Belasco or no one. She left the manuscript for Mr. Belasco, with some difficulty — difficulty because she had never seen a stage door before. "Give this to Mr. Belasco", she said importantly, and departed.

That was on Saturday morning. "I don't think I should go to the Davenports for the weekend", she told Mr. Davis. "I might hear from Mr. Belasco about my play!" He smilingly assured her that he imagined it would be quite all right. Nevertheless, she worried for fear some message might come from the producer to the Holland House where she was staying. Sunday night she rushed back to her room, thinking, "There might be a message from Mr. Belasco." As she came near the door, she heard the telephone ringing. "Mr. Belasco", she decided. The idea that he might not like her play never for an instant occurred to her. She answered.

"This is Mr. Frank Keenan", she heard. "I'm with Mr. Belasco. He's just read your play and wants to star me in it. Could you come up to see him?"

Now Mrs. Rinehart was not in the least astonished, only pleased; but she was worried. She had been carefully reared in Pittsburg. This sounded unconventional.

"Well you know," she explained, "I'm all alone in New York without my husband. I couldn't very well come to see Mr. Belasco, could I?"

"Just a minute!" said Mr. Keenan, probably fainting with surprise or laughter. Presently he returned.

"That's all right", he assured her. "Mr. Belasco will send for you tomorrow and my wife will be here to chaperone you. You'll come?"

Of course she came, in the famous brougham that Mr. Belasco was then using, for he refused to have an automobile long after that contrivance was current. So, under the chaperonage of Mrs. Keenan, the first Rinehart play was sold. There have been many since, and some of them have delighted thousands — and made thousands also.

The other story is as charming in its way. It illustrates two things: this indomitable woman's determination to be gay and her fondness for sport. If you have read her travel books you know how much she enjoys riding, fishing, all forms of outdoor exercise. She had just been through a grave operation and was still exceedingly weak. The family had taken her to a ranch in Wyoming for a rest. There she lay on her bed in a cabin back of which ran a little stream. Dr. Rinehart and the boys had tucked her in carefully and gone for a ride so that she could sleep undisturbed. After they had left she kept hearing the stream, and she decided that she would fish. She got out of bed, so weak that she shook from head to foot, put on a wrapper, got a hook and line, crept around to the back of the house. At this point her courage almost failed her, but she was bent on success. The rocks were wet and slippery, bushes impeded her progress, she was trembling so that she could hardly keep her balance. Yet, holding on to a bush with one hand, she crouched there and made a cast. A trout was her reward. She took it off, cleaned it, hung it up in front of the cottage, sank exhausted into bed. When the family returned there was "Mother's fish".

This has been her spirit always, and Dr. Rinehart has made it possible for her to carry out her plans. He gave up his surgery to undertake tuberculosis investigation. This work he has performed, by dint of many sacrifices, with the government and on his own account. His book, "The Commonsense of

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Health", is as sane and as clever in the medical field as are his wife's in the land of romance. He it was who taught her to have a sense of humor, she claims — and it is her wit that gives to her romances their most unusual quality.

How does she work?

"Rewrite, rewrite, rewrite!" might almost be the motto pinned above Mrs. Rinehart's desk. Very early in her career she said to herself: "If I can get twenty five dollars for a story like that one, why can't I get twice as much for one twice as good?" Whereupon she set out to write one twice as good — and was rewarded. She has little patience with authors who finish their work in the throes of inspiration, then say, "I can't bear to look at it again!" Who else can be expected to look at their work, if they can't?

The genesis of a Rinehart story is something like this: First, the locale (her setting becomes real to her in all its details); then the characters; last of all, the plot — sometimes the final twist of the story does not work out until after a rewriting. The first draft is made on large sheets of yellow paper and in longhand. It is then copied by a secretary. "That", she says, "is for myself!" Then comes the more exigent task of preparing a second draft. Mrs. Rinehart used once to paste together the pieces; but she had to give up pasting in favor of pins, because in her excitement the glue pot was likely to behave as no proper glue pot should, and the sticky results were distracting. Watching her at work on a second draft is like watching an expert surgeon in the operating room — a word snipped here, a paragraph there, a new paragraph added, whole pages abandoned. She always seems to know exactly what she wants to do. This draft is the public's. In it she must make plain the details and characters which were plain perhaps only to her in the first draft.

"Writing is a clean profession", Mrs. Rinehart has said:

> The writer gets out of it exactly what he puts in, no more and no less. It is one man work. No one can help. The writer works alone, solitary and unaided. And, contrary to the general opinion, what the writer has done in the past does not help him in the future. He must continue to make good, day after day.
>
> More than that he must manufacture a new article every day, and every working hour of his day. He cannot repeat himself. Can you imagine a manufacturer turning out something different all the time? And his income stopping if he has a sick headache, or goes to a funeral?

She works at varying hours and for varying lengths of time, usually in the morning, taking afternoon hours for rest and recreation. This year, before she starts on the writing of her Washington novel, she and Dr. Rinehart are going to Europe. Her sons are now in New York, all three of them. One of them writes, and all of them are learning to be publishers. One of the last tasks Mrs. Rinehart did before getting ready to go to Europe was to oversee the decorating of an apartment for them in New York. "They like their old college furniture", she told me. "Terrible broken down morris chairs, rickety stuff. Of course I wouldn't offend them—" Then she discovered that, perhaps, they didn't like it so much after all, and put in several days that delighted her heart, buying furniture and seeing that they were comfortable. She is proud of the fact that she is a grandmother at an early age (she is not long past forty), and she still has the smallest concern of the largest son on her mind. Imaginative, wholesome, attractive, ambitious, hard working, a master of technique as well as of dreaming — the reasons for her success are easy to see, if difficult for the novice to follow.

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# THE LONDONER

*The Invasion of Privacy — A New Life of Stevenson — A New Humorist — Stendhal in Translation — Hazlitt — Price and Honor in Literature*

LONDON, *January* 1, 1925.

I SUPPOSE that famous people have at all times found it difficult to escape from the inquisitiveness of the world. Even in the nineteenth century we find that there were unscrupulous and impertinent visitors to the eminent who crawled into houses and peered over palings, made excuses to see the admired geniuses, and pursued the said geniuses with callous pertinacity. One celebrated man of my acquaintance, a person of great mildness of manner, once told me that in order to escape a too persistent visitor, who respected no privacy, he hastened to his own lavatory, and hid. The visitor waited patiently outside the door of the lavatory, his finger to his lips, and a rapt and adoring expression in his eyes. What a tale all such conscienceless sleuths must afterward be able to tell their friends. They can set out the habits of the great man; they can describe his peculiarities of speech, manner, diet, wit, and clothing; they can admire themselves without limit for their powers of stupid persecution; they can sell their impressions to the gutter, and figure everlastingly in the records of all who rake the ground for tittletattle. It is becoming increasingly difficult for any man or woman to escape the attentions of those who would pry upon his daily life. Strangers will enter his home upon the plea that they admire his work; they may come to the woman celebrity and steal her thoughts and publish them to the world. They are parasites, but their parasitism is commercially profitable to them, and so they care not at all for the decencies which govern the minds of all who have the ability to feel shame and sympathy. There have been one or two instances of this sort of thing within my own recollection. I was myself once interviewed in England by a man who desired details of a subject as to which I had special information. I requested that no mention of my name should occur in his article. He gave me the explicit promise that my name should not appear. It was headlined. In another case a conversation was invented between myself and two other men, and was printed in a weekly journal. Thomas Hardy once admitted to his house a visitor who proved very agreeable, and who so plied Mr. Hardy with questions that he elicited certain statements from Mr. Hardy. He had no notebook; it was impossible to foresee that he would use all he had gleaned for the purpose of making an indecent article. Mr. Wells was once surprised to find a private conversation circulated all over the world. I could add to these instances. They are the everyday experience of all who live partly in the public eye. It is the penalty of any sort of success that one's words are retailed, printed, and garbled. Details of one's dress, demeanor, private conduct, are all circulated with impunity. There is no law to prevent their circulation. Inquisitiveness is so insatiable that there is no end to the quotation of



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private letters, the repetition of private conversations, and the manufacture of anecdote regarding private lives. It is a deplorable state of affairs.

And now a new terror has been added to those already existing. We have had fictional narratives in which men and women have told how this one and that one lives: we now have a singular document purporting to tell a true story about a living man, and purporting to be written by his wife. The "Daily Express" has just exploited with sensational advertising a serial work called "A Word about Arnold Bennett", by his wife. The paper prefaces each instalment with the statement that Mr. and Mrs. Bennett have been living apart for the last two years; and the inference is clearly drawn that the "revelations" are of a melodramatic character. They are not so, of course, because there are no melodramatic revelations to be made upon the subject of Arnold Bennett's life. They are merely silly and novelettish. But they are being published in such a way, and they are written in such a way, as to bring Mr. Bennett's private affairs into the most vulgar notoriety. There is no justification for this. The whole scheme is an offense against taste which cannot be excused. One would have thought that the least the wife of a distinguished man could do would be to respect her husband's reputation, to respect her own reputation because it is linked with that of her husband. Mrs. Bennett has done neither. To gratify her own egotism — for there is no spitefulness in these memoirs, which exist simply because Mrs. Bennett is unaware that she is transgressing the laws of common propriety — she has written some of the silliest modern journalism I have ever seen. By writing it, she may add some hundreds of pounds to an already very generous income, but she will lose the respect of all those readers who are able to distinguish between what is legitimate and what is not legitimate. She does not perceive that ignorant people will suppose her husband to have countenanced the work. She does not realize that her emotional recollections make herself ridiculous and her husband's characteristics the gossip of a million homes. Somebody should have told her. The person responsible for putting the work into English (of which language Mrs. Bennett has no sure command) should have told her. The proprietors of the "Daily Express" should have told her. The eventual publishers of her story in book form should dissuade her from the enterprise. What she has to tell of Mr. Bennett has no value. It is full of inaccuracies in minor facts, and full of absurdities. It is one of the worst lapses from taste that has come to my knowledge in a lifetime's experience of strange mental vagaries in The Sex.

* * * *

I have been reading also the new life of Robert Louis Stevenson by John A. Steuart. It is a pompous and empty work, of no real interest as a contribution to Stevensonian biography. Mr. Steuart is an oldish man who has written a number of novels and has done a good deal of journalism. He was at one time editor of "The Publishers' Circular". He began writing books before the close of last century, and his name has never previously been before the public in any connection so important as that of the present book. It is hard to express the feeling which one has in plowing through Mr. Steuart's biography. The book represents a good deal of work, and some of its pages are quite sound and even obvious; but on the whole one has a sense of puffing and blowing. One

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feels that Mr. Steuart sat down at his desk in the morning with an immense consciousness of importance. He is like a little boy playing at soldiers, shouting and swaggering about nothing at all. One pictures him with all sorts of little bits of paper, arranging them and breathing hard, admiring his book all the time, and filled with a stern sense of duty. The truth must be told, one feels him saying; and if there is ever such a little bit of new truth to be told it must be puffed up into the semblance of a great heap. In fact, the amount of new material in this book is negligible. Mr. Steuart does not write like a Stevenson expert. If his biography had been of a man who lived about 1560, who had never been studied before, it might have seemed a worthy and laborious work. But Stevenson lived more recently than 1560. Friends of his, who knew him well, are still with us. He has been more written about than any man of his age. Books and books and books about Stevenson already exist. Mr. Steuart's only chance of attaining importance in this connection was to tell us something new that was also valuable. He should have had a mass of new details, a new view of Stevenson's talent or his life. He has not these things. He has discovered — as others have done — that Stevenson had some mistresses in early life. He gropes about and tries to imagine what these girls are like; but he succeeds only in speculating about them. He adds nothing to our knowledge of Stevenson by naming two of these girls, and by adding that the third was the daughter of a blacksmith. Here the puffing and blowing becomes positively stertorous. Mr. Steuart cannot make us see what importance these three young women have in a life of Stevenson. Had they any effect upon his work? Had they any effect upon his life? It seems from Mr. Steuart's pages that they had not. They swim into the book, and go out of it again, and Mr. Steuart goes on to tell the same old story that other biographers have told. The three waifs have dropped through his pages as so many stones would have done. They do not become real, or significant. Mr. Steuart knows nothing of any interest about them. He merely mentions them, with immense disclaimers of any desire to write for prurient minded readers; and they are gone. Again, he makes a great parade of the fact that he is the first biographer of Stevenson to give the truth of the Henley-Stevenson quarrel. He is certainly the first biographer to make such claims, and to hoick the thing out of its true importance in the life of Stevenson; but Miss Masson gave last year the necessary facts, and Mr. Steuart adds nothing to these that matters much. No: we still await the final biography of Stevenson. I do not know that many people now need this; but it will probably come (if Stevenson is remembered so long) in about a hundred years, when Mr. Steuart's book has a purely antiquarian interest, as a large mass of material concerning Stevenson which was once built around an inconsiderable number of "discoveries" regarding the life of its subject.

* * * *

News of a new humorist is always very welcome, and I am glad to mention that one is to be found. Indeed, I claim no credit for the discovery, and I ought to have made it for myself before now; but at least, rather late in the field, I can add a small amount of praise and information. The name of this writer is Ben Travers, and he is the author of four or five works of a fresh and agreeable description. His nearest af-

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finity seems to me to be A. A. Milne, but this comparison must not be pressed, for Mr. Travers (whose dialogue is of the kind that foreshadows a successful theatrical future) differs markedly from Mr. Milne. He has not, for example, Mr. Milne's admirable neatness. On the other hand, he has a more robust method than Mr. Milne and sails, if I may be permitted the term, somewhat nearer the wind. But he has a delightful faculty for talking nonsense, and he has a great fund of comic incident. Jokes bubble out of him. He is being lively the whole time. He has comic curates and comic landladies, but they are hardly the comic curates and comic landladies of our fears. They are "different". As a consequence, Mr. Travers keeps his end up very well. I learn that the author of "The Dippers", "A Cuckoo in the Nest", and other works was at one time on the London staff of the publishing house of John Lane. He is the son of an East India merchant whose business was founded originally in the time of Queen Elizabeth, while other ancestors have been distinguished surgeons. A Charterhouse boy, as other eminent writers have been before him, Mr. Travers lives in the West of England, and he is now writing hard. The firm of John Lane publishes his books in this country, and Doubleday, Page and Company are to bring them out in the United States. A new novel, entitled "Mischief", is to appear in 1925 with the Doubleday imprint. It will be extremely interesting to see how this new humorist strikes American readers. His sponsor at the moment is William McFee, who one day picked up "A Cuckoo in the Nest" by accident in Medellin, Antioquia, Republic of Colombia. McFee immediately recognized the book's worth, and wrote to England for more books by Mr. Travers, also for information regarding their writer. He compares "A Cuckoo in the Nest" with "The Experiences of an Irish R. M." Through McFee's earnest enthusiasm, Mr. Travers is to find an American market. I warn American readers that they now owe Mr. McFee a fresh debt of gratitude, in addition to those already existing, for they will enjoy Mr. Travers's humor and be exceedingly glad of it. Mr. McFee, who is going to Havana in April, is at that period publishing a new book. It is not fiction this time, but a travel book, "Sunlight in New Granada".

* * * *

In the spring will be published the first volumes of a translation of Stendhal. This is not the first time that there has been a translation of the chief novels of Stendhal, but the existing translation of "Le Rouge et le Noir" is depressing, while that of "La Chartreuse de Parme" is not easily obtainable. I never saw this latter, but am told it is goodish only. There has been, I think, a translation also of "De l'Amour". How Stendhal will read in the English of Mr. Scott Moncrieff I cannot say, but it may be taken as certain that the translation will be as good as a marked gift for translation can make it. The series, which it is hoped to make an inclusive one, will open with "The Certosa of Parma" (an odd version, but apparently better than "The Charterhouse", though less good in my opinion — because it obscures the book's identity without finding an English equivalent — than "The Chartreuse"). It will be seen why "Certosa" has been chosen. It is the actual name. To have the French name of an Italian institution in the middle of an English title is too polyglot for the translator's ideas. How-

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ever, that is a minor point. The main thing is that two of the greatest novels ever written are to be presented in an English dress. What will the English make of them? Impossible to say. I have always regarded "La Chartreuse de Parme" as the greatest romantic novel I have read in the whole course of my life; but I find that it is not regarded as a romantic novel at all by other people. Let us therefore omit the epithet. I am not to the same extent a lover of "Le Rouge et le Noir", although there are matchless scenes in that work. I have never read anything to compare with the scene in which Julien Sorel, having climbed a ladder into his mistress's bedroom (by arrangement), finds that neither he nor his mistress can think of anything to say or do. It has a kind of terrible truth permitted only to masters. After "The Certosa of Parma" we are to have some of the biographies (of Rossini and others), a volume of short stories, and some of the travel books. Stendhal was a great enthusiast for the music of Rossini. Upon hearing that arrangement of Rossini's airs which has been made by Respighi for the ballet "La Boutique Fantasque", it is not hard to understand the reason. He also wrote a life of Napoleon which I have not read. How soon the new edition is to include that extraordinary work "La Vie de Henri Brulard" (of which I see that Knopf is this season giving to English and American readers a new version) I do not know. But it may be said that this book is most interesting to students of Stendhal. It is better that they should read first the great novels. Then they will be able to stomach even "Armance", a ridiculous novel, and by way of the fascinating travel books go to the more abstruse and fragmentary works of a great writer whose personality is so interesting, psychologically, that a man might do worse than set himself to master it — if he could accomplish the task.

* * * *

Stendhal must have met Hazlitt at one time — at least, so I infer from a reference to (I think) "Count Stendhal" in one of Hazlitt's works. It is an agreeable thought. Somehow it gives real pleasure to believe that two such men had an esteem for each other. Very different in character, as I should suppose from a superficial mental comparison, they had both a particular form of loneliness, a coldness, an emotionalism (what used to be called a "sensibility"), and a strong touch of the egotistical sublime. The "Liber Amoris" does not — for myself — give as much pleasure as Stendhal's explorations of love; but that is a matter of taste. I am led to speak thus because I have been looking through a set of proofs of a new volume which P. P. Howe is publishing, entitled "New Writings by William Hazlitt". Mr. Howe's big book on Hazlitt is one to which I have several times referred here, because it filled a gap and because it is an extremely able book. Mr. Howe has no peer as an authority upon the life and works of Hazlitt. And in his very devoted labor upon this biography he has come across (and from time to time has augmented by deliberate search) a number of characteristic pieces which have never before been attributed to Hazlitt by his editors or which certainly have not previously been printed in volume form as a part of the Hazlitt "text". The book — it is only a small one, but it consists of fifty thousand words and its interest is remarkable — contains a variety of essays, some of them quite long ones, including those two which

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have recently been published in "The Times Literary Supplement" and "The London Mercury". It begins with a lengthy paper called "Travelling Abroad", and has three "conversations" which to those who love the "Conversations with James Northcote" as much as I do will be highly welcome. I think the idea of this little book is delightful. It is welcome not only for itself but because it sets us longing for all the other books which we should so much like to have discovered and edited for our delectation. There are many such, from late and ripe works by Jane Austen (I should guess that this would be about the most popular discovery for modern humane readers, although I admit that I speak as one quite ignorant of the Greek and Latin classics) to a long series of new adventures of Sherlock Holmes. But if we cannot have these delights let us be the more thankful for the discoveries of Hazlitt treasure. For it is treasure. Let there be no doubt of that. Lovers of Hazlitt, possessing this book, will find themselves back in the old state of happiness at contact with an original mind in the critical domain. I spoke at the time of the essay (it was in reality a review of a volume of Landor's "Imaginary Conversations") which appeared in "The Times Literary Supplement". That essay finds its place in "New Writings by William Hazlitt" along with more than thirty others, long and short. It takes its place, and no more than that, which is sufficient testimony to the interest of the volume as a whole. There are "maxims" in the book, essays upon phrenology, "Coquets", and some of Hazlitt's favorite subjects such as Jeffrey, Lord North, Cobbett, "The Influence of Books", etc. There is also a series of theatrical criticisms. I commend the volume to all of the true faith.

The other night at a public dinner Mr. Churchill asked to be told the difference between journalism and literature; and Sir James Barrie gave some imaginary recollections of men he never saw. His principal memory was of a scene with Robert Louis Stevenson at a time when both were young. It was perhaps a little hard upon a not specially cultured audience to be thus teased, because most of them probably had no more notion than the nearest automobile of the respective ages of Stevenson and Barrie; but the speech made amusing reading. It was not until Sir James's recollections grew unbelievably extravagant that the laughter became anything more than halfhearted. Mr. Churchill's remarks must have been almost equally obscure to the gathering. He asked whether the price of a guinea and a half was what distinguished literature from journalism. His speech was an essay in a very easy form of sport. It took nobody anywhere. But it suggested some curious thoughts upon literature and journalism. Also upon price. Price is a problem. It has nothing to do, of course, with either literature or journalism. It does not so distinguish the two. Much is published at high prices which is not even journalism. Much of our most expensive publication is to be described only as rubbish. But the truth about price is one which it is hard to express. Price is decided as a rule by two considerations. The first is the number of copies likely to be sold; the second is the amount which the public can be expected to pay. Often, so fine are the profits of the publishing trade cut, there may be an animated discussion as to whether a book can be published at a profit at all. Some books are very expensive to produce. Practically all illustrated books are very serious problems. The art-

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ist's fees, the cost of the blocks, the special paper, the special printing, and the extra charge made by the binders for inserting the plates, have all to be considered. High royalties make a great difference. Excessive discounts to the bookselling trade (who, as I have said here previously, suppose themselves to be the only class of the community which has to pay rent, wages, etc.) reduce the publishers' profits. In order to meet all his obligations, the publisher has to fix a price that will pay his own expenses, his wages bill, his royalties, his stationers' bills, his printers' bills, his binders' bills. His working expenses as a rule are from twenty to twenty five per cent of his turnover. Where, therefore, he sees a chance of making some profit, he takes it. Or, where the number which is likely to be sold of any given book is extremely small, he fixes a price which will repay his outlay upon what he regards as the minimum possible sale. Often, of course, his expectations are dashed. Sometimes his expectations are exceeded. Then what a proud man is the publisher! He really believes that he is a judge of books! But as far as literature is concerned, price is no criterion. As far as literature is concerned, even variety is not the only test. One might guess that the novel was the lowest form of literature if one took the word of those who cannot write novels. Sir Ronald Ross, for example, has been trying to read "Riceyman Steps", and failing to do so. He has come to the conclusion — the modest conclusion — that novels live a season or two, and that "romance", which is what he writes himself — that is, indifferent writing about facts of scientific interest — lives forever. Sir Ronald Ross spoke after a meal, and he evidently does not know what he is talking about once the field of his own interests has been explored. But Edmund Gosse, that very old gentleman who from time to time allows himself to be spiteful about modern letters, has put it upon record that all novelists write only for money. If it pleases Mr. Gosse or anybody else to suppose that novelists choose their calling for the sake of its profits, and then pursue it solely with the object of enlarging their banking accounts, nobody can prevent the circulation of a comforting untruth. It cannot be said, however, that Mr. Gosse has ever written for love. The note of ungenerosity to all who are not of his way of thinking is not the most admirable turn for a literary critic. It sets a bad standard. Those who cannot make a living by their original work do ill to asperse the honor of those others who as the result of greater gifts have been more successful.

SIMON PURE

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# THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Retail Bookseller", and* "THE BOOKMAN'S *Monthly Score". Such books as the editor specially recommends are marked with a star.*

MOTHER MASON — Bess Streeter Aldrich — *Appleton.* Scenes from the life of a happy, hard working family told with witty sympathy.

* THE GREEN HAT — Michael Arlen — *Doran.* Iris Storm, difficult to fathom, fascinating, perverse, makes many friends and some enemies.

PEACOCK FEATHERS — Temple Bailey — *Penn.* A boyhood love persists through pages of sweetness and light.

THE SEVEN SLEEPERS — Francis Beeding — *Little, Brown.* International intrigue with conspirators, secret codes, murders, love, and all the other trimmings.

DESERT BREW — B. M. Bower — *Little, Brown.* A baffling game of cross purposes and a good love story besides.

A GENTLEMAN OF COURAGE — James Oliver Curwood — *Cosmopolitan.* Highly colored woods drama of animal life, human love, and the inevitable sacrifice.

THE UNKNOWN QUANTITY — Ethel M. Dell — *Putnam.* The wedding day and its wish start another trail of sobs and laughter.

WIDE WATERS — Captain Dingle — *Brentano.* A deep sea yarn spun with a mastery to make us eager for more by the same pen.

FOLLOWING THE GRASS — Harry Sinclair Drago — *Macaulay.* The Nevada sheep and cattle war gives rise to a dramatic love story.

THE MAN WHO PLUNDERED THE CITY — Sven Elvestad — *McBride.* This detective mystery, though utterly improbable, is highly amusing and well translated.

NINA — Susan Ertz — *Appleton.* An unhappy marriage discussed with pathos, wit, and understanding.

* SO BIG — Edna Ferber — *Doubleday, Page.* Mother and son still appeal in this fine study of American life.

THE FLOWER BENEATH THE FOOT — Ronald Firbank — *Brentano.* An attenuated parable of Continental life, whose innuendos run the gamut from the maliciously smart to the ordinarily vulgar.

* A PASSAGE TO INDIA — E. M. Forster — *Harcourt, Brace.* Finely wrought study of Anglo-Indian relations with moments of drama.

* THE WHITE MONKEY — John Galsworthy — *Scribner.* Society reacts to the war and recovers from it — a novel that is provocative and easy to read.

HUMPTY DUMPTY — Ben Hecht — *Hyman-McGee.* The egotist triumphant again in a brilliant book of perverse philosophies.

* BALISAND — Joseph Hergesheimer — *Knopf.* Southern airs and graces, romance, chivalry, make this one of the most fascinating of American historical novels.

THE SLAVE SHIP — Mary Johnston — *Little, Brown.* A young Jacobite supporter, sold as a slave in Virginia, runs away, only to become more deeply involved in the traffic as a dealer himself. One man's inner battle that gives, by slow piling up of detail, the temper of those restless times.

THE ENCHANTED HILL — Peter B. Kyne — *Cosmopolitan.* An ex-aviator finds New Mexico far from placid.

RUGGED WATER — Joseph C. Lincoln — *Appleton.* Adventures in the old life saving service — more thrilling and as amusing as other Lincoln books.

THE COMING OF AMOS — William J. Locke — *Dodd, Mead.* Amos is a simple soul — society in various parts of Europe and a Russian princess make life less simple for him.



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ON BOARD THE "MORNING STAR"— Pierre MacOrlan — *A. and C. Boni.* Grisly, grim and gruesome, but a corking good pirate tale with hair on its chest.

THE PLASTIC AGE — Percy Marks — *Century.* A college youth finds virtue difficult to cope with in the lurid surroundings of fictionized college life.

THE VALLEY OF VOICES — George Marsh — *Penn.* An ethnologist, a violinist, snowy country, and grim events.

* SARD HARKER — John Masefield — *Macmillan.* Adventure clothed in brilliant poetical writing. A romance in a thousand.

EAST OF THE SETTING SUN — George Barr McCutcheon — *Dodd, Mead.* Another George Barr McCutcheon princess makes bacherlorhood bearable.

THE QUAINT COMPANIONS — Leonard Merrick — *Dutton.* A masterly description of the inevitable unhappiness resulting when a Mayfair girl marries a Negro.

IN A SHANTUNG GARDEN — Louise Jordan Miln — *Stokes.* A colorful romance of the East in which a young American finds his heart lost to a highborn Chinese lady.

ROSE OF THE WORLD — Kathleen Norris — *Doubleday, Page.* Rose as a character is vivid and worth a far better plot than that through which she moves.

THE INEVITABLE MILLIONAIRES — E. Phillips Oppenheim — *Little, Brown.* A new, improved use of the "Brewster's Millions" idea, and comical to boot.

THE PASSIONATE QUEST — E. Phillips Oppenheim — *Little, Brown.* Modern London is the setting for a story with a charming, wistful, and adventurous heroine.

LIBERATION — Isabel Ostrander — *McBride.* A posthumous novel well up to the standard of this popular author of crime stories.

* THE INVISIBLE WOMAN — Herbert Quick — *Bobbs-Merrill.* Completes the trilogy begun by "Vandemark's Folly" and "The Hawkeye". A true story and a good one, though lacking the vital and racy panorama of pioneer life which constituted much of the charm of the earlier books. (*See page 766.*)

RED OF THE REDFIELDS — Grace S. Richmond — *Doubleday, Page.* More concerning Dr. Red Pepper Burns.

SAINT MARTIN'S SUMMER — Rafael Sabatini — *Houghton Mifflin.* Old France and a Sabatini damsel rescued as all Sabatini damsels must suffer rescue.

* THE LITTLE FRENCH GIRL — Anne Douglas Sedgwick — *Houghton Mifflin.* An Anglo-French love story involving contrasting backgrounds and philosophies.

ISLES OF THE BLEST — Wilbur Daniel Steele — *Harper.* The seamy side of life in the lovely South Sea Islands ruthlessly disclosed.

* THE NEEDLE'S EYE — Arthur Train — *Scribner.* How a man meets great wealth and fights its influence on his soul. Well done.

DEEP IN THE HEARTS OF MEN — Mary E. Waller — *Little, Brown.* Throbbings of a coal miner's heart toward light and understanding.

* THE OLD LADIES — Hugh Walpole — *Doran.* Dramatic, poignant, finely spun story of old age and its tragedy.

INNOCENT DESIRES — E. L. Grant Watson — *Liveright.* Brief sketches of unhappy dwellers in the Australian bush.

* PROFESSOR, HOW COULD YOU? — Harry Leon Wilson — *Cosmopolitan.* A college professor seeks red blood and open spaces — vastly amusing.

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# THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

BOOKS THAT MAY HAVE ESCAPED YOU

1. *"Augustus Baldwin Longstreet" by John Donald Wade (Macmillan). A charming and illuminating study of southern life and culture.*

2. *"Doctor Dolittle" by Hugh Lofting (Stokes). An American classic for children that should not be forgotten.*

3. *"The Singing Season" by Isabel Paterson (Boni, Liveright). Lovely romance of religion in old Spain.*

4. *"The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page" by Burton J. Hendrick (Doubleday, Page). An illuminating piece of American biography.*

5. *"The Meaning of Prayer" by Harry Emerson Fosdick (Doran). An early Fosdick book that is finely inspirational.*

## *Newspaper Romance*

GREAT men sometimes survive as quiet personalities illumined by great deeds. Joseph Pulitzer, as pictured in Don Seitz's "Joseph Pulitzer: His Life and Letters" (Simon, Schuster), was not without great and romantic deeds; but his quixotic egotism quite overshadows his achievements. This is a fine record of an unusual man — a man loved by his contemporaries in spite of astounding personal mannerisms; a man who suffered physical affliction bravely and carried on a great business in spite of it. Imagine the mind which could dream of wanting a war just to see what it would do to a newspaper! Such, Mr. Seitz intimates, was his feeling toward our slight conflict with Spain. His papers were his life, and he was the newspaper man first, last, and always. Indomitable, restless, sensitive, highly imaginative — his demand was for power and for intellectual righteousness. His attempt to shoot Captain Edward Augustine, a political opponent in St. Louis, at first seemed the action of a rash youth; but the clean up in lobbyist methods that resulted seemed to justify the fury. So much of his often strange violence achieved spectacular and worthwhile results. The biography becomes a history of politics, thought, and newspaper development as well as a record of Mr. Pulitzer. Seitz draws a clever, if somewhat onesided, sketch of Rooseveltian methods. Mr. Hearst is sketched in through J. P.'s eyes. New York "World" events are detailed and prove interesting. There is given much of the personality of the late Frank I. Cobb and of Mr. Pulitzer's advice, encouragement, and admonishment to that great editor. Mr. Seitz has told a romantic and a dramatic story, and one in which facts and incidents abound. It must have been a rare man who could virtually run a paper for eighteen years during which he visited his office only three times. So actual did that absent personality become, with his scrawled messages from Bar Harbor or his cables from the yacht "Liberty" at Nice, that he seemed still to exert a paternal influence over those of us whose apprenticeship on the "World" came long after his death. "Accuracy, Terseness, Accuracy" are words no "World" man will forget, though he may neglect to apply them. A weak man does not recognize a fundamental weakness as did Mr. Pulitzer. He knew that vital-



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ity, vigor, suddenness of idea were a part of his genius. He knew they were also his danger. He counseled his men to disregard an order that seemed to them unwise, impulsive or foolish. Although he often became furious when his dictates were not followed, if his judgment proved unsound he was quick to acknowledge fault. I have failed to emphasize in this review the "success" story of the foreign youngster coming into Boston to become one of America's leading citizens. It is a great story; but the greater story, and one which Mr. Seitz has painted well, is of the years of blindness and detachment, in which keen interest was always preserved and the vivid hand of the master apparent to the last. I should like to quote one table of editorial instructions as example of the temperament of this quixotic and unequaled journalist:

1. Don't commit the paper for Bryan unless you hear from me.

2. Don't hamper the paper's freedom for the next forty days to do anything after that.

3. Don't cease vigorous opposition to Rooseveltism in all phases; ditto Republicanism whenever wrong.

4. Don't say an unnecessary unkind word about Taft. Treat him fairly. Not a word of untruth under any circumstances against him or Bryan; or anybody else, not even Hearst.

5. Don't hesitate to criticise Taft politically as Roosevelt's proxy or dummy until he disproves it.

6. Don't defend Bryan on any charge made against him which you know to be founded.

7. Don't hesitate at all proper times to repeat that his platform is a great improvement over '96 and 1900 especially on (a) jingoism and Roosevelt's war fake spirit (b) Philippinism (c) Publicity Plank (d) Tariff Reform (e) Retrenchment in National Expenses. Bryan coming to it rather than the "World" going to them.

8. Don't comment on everything Bryan says. Don't be afraid to ignore his speeches and talk. Don't forget that you are not compelled to write and express an opinion on anything; that *silence, silence, silence* is peculiarly wise at times.

9. Don't, whatever happens, ever sa that Bryan will or should be elected or tha he is even fit and qualified.

10. Don't forget that I will give yo several hats after the election if you ca observe these rules, especially the las No. 9.

All this subject to change, perhaps tc morrow, if the news and facts shoul change.

## *A Homely Trilogy*

OF Herbert Quick's three inter locked stories of the old midwest "Vandemark's Folly" remains for m the most glamorous. Yet each is good "The Invisible Woman" (Bobbs-Mer rill) a shade better reading than "Th Hawkeye", its progression and devel opment as a story surer. Christin Thorkelson and Owen Gowdy carry th main incidents of this homely yet oc casionally melodramatic story. The were born of the same mother, Rowen Fewkes, whose tragedy was exposed i "Vandemark's Folly". This is a stor of the law and its manipulations, of tw rival firms, of a judge and his insan wife, of political strivings in that earl midwest. The framework is adorne by Herbert Quick's really fine abilit to draw characters that immediatel catch the interest. His book is packe with them. You follow the story fo their sakes, and yet it is curiosity t find out what happens to them rathe than any real love or friendship fo them that drives you on. This cir cumstance is due to a curious detach ment on the part of the author. His style is clear, dry, unadorned; he stands away and watches his story de velop before him. He has a perfect right to his method; but if the reade misses passion and glow of words and emotion, he must, I think, blame this peculiarity of technique. The book yet remains one of the most interesting

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f current novels. The insanity of Irs. Silverthorn is handled with droitness and perception, the trial ene is clear and dramatic. The ilogy, as a whole, demands our respect nd admiration. Even higher compliients may be paid Mr. Quick, for his ooks can be reread with interest, so lled are they with amusing and colorıl detail.

*In the Winter a Poet's Fancy—*

[T is seldom in one month that four American poets appear whose work really worth recommending for one eason or another. Of the four remarked here, William Ellery Leonard , perhaps, the best poet; but it is Iark Van Doren's "Spring Thunder" Seltzer) that I should like best to have pon my shelves. Van Doren's stark rics remind occasionally of the early obert Frost. They have a warmer ote, though. They are less dramatic, ith a more human love of the small liosyncrasies of nature. The one riticism I should make of these beautiıl and carefully fashioned and tender oems is in regard to the thing on which he poet probably most prides himself, is casualness. To me it seems a manerism; to another it may seem a rength. He chooses a single incident nd, without particular development, akes a poem of it. "Javelins" is, for xample, a lovely pastoral — too casual or complete success, yet undoubtedly uccessful in doing what Van Doren ieant it to do. "Big Mare", on the ther hand, strikes me as a thoroughly ovely dramatic lilt. Van Doren likes nimals, and many of his poems pay ribute to them, quietly. He is a quiet oet, and a real poet. Among the ounger men he takes rank, it seems to me, along with Hervey Allen, among the first four or five. William Ellery Leonard, in "Tutankhamen and After" (Huebsch) adds a series of excellent dramatic lyrics to his other collected volumes. I have not been fortunate enough to see the privately printed "Two Lives" of which are published such encomiums in the back of this volume. I find some of these later poems of Mr. Leonard's dull; but they are always illuminated by fine lines and the volume is made excellent by such poems as "Indian Summer" or "Lucretius". Martha Ostenso's "A Far Land" (Seltzer) is spirited and gay in execution. She has a true lyric sense and uses it without stutters of self consciousness. A normal book, and one that will please. I don't like always to be finding other poets in people's work, but there are echoes here of both Mrs. Wylie and Miss Millay; not too strong, though, to eliminate originality. Beautifully printed, quaintly bound, the fragile verses of Hildegarde Flanner again appear. She has been some time silent. Her strange gift has matured. H. D. and Miss Flanner have coldness and quietness in common; but under H. D's detachment runs a flame that is missing in these faint yet beautiful clamorings of a young girl's soul for expression. Mysticism, too, has its place here. Four or five exquisite lyrics would mark "A Tree in Bloom" (Lantern Press) as notable. Such a one is the last poem:

TO ONE OF LITTLE FAITH

Put out the mourners from your heart,
And bid your still soul rise.
It is not death, but only sleep
That fastens down your eyes.

Return, O Galilean days,
Judean hands, return!
Make bloom the lily in the ash
Of this neglected urn.

— *J. F.*

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# A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

## INTERPRETING THOREAU

By Gordon Hall Gerould

LÉON BAZALGETTE, who in 1908 dealt faithfully with Walt Whitman, has now published the results of his study of Thoreau in a somewhat similar volume, admirably translated by Van Wyck Brooks. Although unencumbered by footnotes — in this repects differing from the book on Whitman — it is a painstaking performance, commendable for the industry with which M. Bazalgette has exploited the abundant material ready to the hand of a biographer. It is commendable, too, for the honest effort made to interpret afresh the singularly gifted and puzzling — if somewhat puzzleheaded — creature who in the Forties and Fifties of the last century observed man and nature from the vantage point of Concord, Massachusetts.

If the book is not altogether a success, it is rather because of the author's limitations as a literary craftsman than because he has not tried very hard. He has attempted to recall Thoreau as M. Maurois attempted to evoke young Shelley in his brilliant "Ariel", but with a more rigid adherence to the documents in the case and a stricter rein on his fancy. Out of Thoreau's books and the invaluable "Journal" he has woven a narrative in which he has aimed to show both the pattern of a life and its explanation. In a measure he has succeeded, since the figure of Thoreau emerges with some degree of clarity as the story proceeds.

Unfortunately he has made a rather dull book, whereas the only justification for writing a biography in the manner of a novel is surely a heightening c interest. I have no means of knowin whither M. Bazalgette's English studie have led him, except that he has cor sorted with Whitman and the Concor group, but I suspect him of a passio for Thomas Carlyle, who in his tim wrote biography in much the sam manner — though in very differen language — as that rediscovered c late by Mr. Strachey and M. Maurois The fact is that M. Bazalgette's book at least in its English form, reads lik Carlyle gone very wrong. All th worst mannerisms are there: the use o the present tense in a wild struggle fo vividness, the direct address with th wearisome epithet, the question flun at a hypothetical audience — the whol spurt and splutter of Carlylese. Muc has to be forgiven Carlyle, since he ha an imaginative grasp, a wit, a power o phrase beyond those of common men but no one save Herman Melville ha ever succeeded in getting effects by th same means, unless, that is, Walt Whit man owes more to him than is generally supposed.

M. Bazalgette, at all events, is not o the race of giants. He grows tediou in his effort to be picturesque, which i a pity, since he has probably under stood Thoreau as well as any continen tal European ever could. His notion of a New England village like Concor are obviously colored, to be sure, by his knowledge of French provincia towns, and his reading of New Englanc character is imperfect; but he has pa tiently constructed in his own mind a fairly accurate model of the little world in which Henry Thoreau played his wilfully lonely game. Had he beer



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ıntent to narrate his discoveries raightforwardly and without pretense, ; might have given us a far more adable book — and a more valuable ıe, also, since the foreigner's examina-ɔn has certain virtues of detachment ırd for the native to come by. As ıings stand, Edward Emerson's little udy and Frank Sanborn's life remain ore adequate interpretations of Tho-au than this. Thoreau was not a mple person, despite his cult of the mple life; and probably no one born ıtside New England is capable of ıderstanding certain aspects of his ɜrsonality until they have been care-lly explained. About one thing, ɔwever, there can be no question: he ıd the power of writing amazingly ɔod prose. His wisdom may be ɔubted, but not his gift of luminous ıd beautiful phrase. It is almost me for us to treasure his writings for hat they are, and perhaps to let his ɜtle eccentricities fall into oblivion.

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enry Thoreau, Bachelor of Nature. By Léon Bazalgette. Translated by Van Wyck Brooks. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

## A FIVE FOOT SHELF OF STORIES

By Gerald Hewes Carson

THERE is a tradition in the publishing business, whispered over ıe teacups in the conference rooms, re-ɜated sagely in the cabals of the pub-ɜity department, that short stories on't sell in book form.

Yet we yearly see more and more of ıem. Whether, then, the tradition is myth, or whether the publishers have ınded themselves together coura-ɔously to win for short stories the recog-ɜtion that they are worth preserving ɜtween book covers, it is neither dis-creet, polite, nor material for me to inquire here. But certain it is, and for whatever reason, that volumes of short stories are being issued at an accelerating rate. And one does not note that they are unhealthily plentiful upon the second hand bookstore counters, or among the "remnant" stocks.

So here, without further preamble, are five new books of short stories. They do not have very much in common — not even an ultimate object. Two are for entertainment. One "is primarily designed for use in schools and colleges"; another addresses the same carefully nurtured public by implication; while another is a yearbook, whose modest merits have aroused such diverse opinions in so many quarters that it now has clearly demonstrated its value, if only as a point of departure.

This latter book is, of course, "The Best British Short Stories of 1924", edited by Edward J. O'Brien and John Cournos. It is a companion volume to the better known American annual which at this writing has yet to be issued for 1924. The book contains twenty six stories, those authors winning the distinction of inclusion being James Murray Allison, Martin Armstrong, Rolf Bennett, Mary Butts, A. E. Coppard, E. M. Delafield, Caradoc Evans, Leslie P. Hartley, Janko Lavrin, William McFee, G. B. MacKenzie, Katherine Mansfield, Archibald Marshall, W. Somerset Maugham, Viola Meynell, Raymond Mortimer, Liam O'Flaherty, Con O'Leary, T. F. Powys, Dorothy Richardson, Helen Rootham, Helen Simpson, Edith Sitwell, H. M. Tomlinson, W. J. Turner, and Romer Wilson.

For reference purposes this book also indexes the whole of the O'Brien-Cournos selection of British short stories, the articles which have appeared upon the short story in British periodi-

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cals between June 1, 1923 and May 31, 1924, and the volumes of short stories published during this period in Great Britain and Ireland.

"Aces" and "Twenty-three Stories by Twenty and Three Authors" are to be read solely because you want to read them. They are not guaranteed to amuse you, for literature is one commodity which lags deplorably behind the times in its merchandising practice; but they do the next best thing, they offer well known names which have something of the same virtue as trademarks. The latter volume is devoted to the mood of terror, its "chief aim" being "to startle". To that end the editors, C. A. Dawson Scott and Ernest Rhys, have sought (chiefly among British authors) and found Gothic romance, murder and miasma. The twenty three authors are Edith Wharton, Thomas Burke, Robert Hichens, W. B. Yeats, the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, L. De Bra, Elinor Mordaunt, A. E. W. Mason, Cutliffe Hyne, Edwin Pugh, R. Ellis Roberts, John Masefield, Louis Golding, Arthur Lynch, A. Conan Doyle, Algernon Blackwood, Ward Muir, Morley Roberts, H. De Vere Stacpoole, T. F. Powys, W. W. Jacobs, Walter de la Mare, and W. Somerset Maugham. This is a curious anthology, really, for it pretends to have no other attraction than the fascination of the things and situations which produce revulsion and shudders. Some of the stories, as one would naturally expect, are obviously thrillers, but all of them are accomplished and adept.

"Aces" is drawn from the literature which fills our great American magazines. Dorothy Canfield, Octavus Roy Cohen, Edna Ferber, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Zona Gale, Bruno Lessing, Kathleen Norris, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Benjamin R. Sher, G. B. Stern, Thyra Samter Winslow, and Israe Zangwill contributed the stories in th interest of the New York Guild for th Jewish Blind. Whatever these storie are, they are never dull. Give Mis Ferber, Miss Gale, or Mr. Cohen a pa agraph and they have you with ther for the balance of their five thousand o so words. This, in spite of the fac that Mr. Cohen has never, and the oth ers have all too seldom, really create a character. One recognizes the fac perfectly — yet reads on. That is per haps the perfect tribute to the polis and allure of the well made piece cu according to American specifications The names of these "Aces" are name to conjure with, and the stories ar magic with the alchemy of the moder teller of tales who transmutes the stuf of imagination and experience into vi brant words which snap off into th ether leaving the strong, acrid odor o modern life in their trail.

The last two volumes are academic "Contemporary Short Stories", se lected by Kenneth Allan Robinson presents work of Sherwood Anderson Arnold Bennett, Thomas Burke, Doro thy Canfield, Willa Cather, Irvin S Cobb, Joseph Conrad, Theodore Dreiser, Edna Ferber, John Gals worthy, Katharine Fullerton Gerould Joseph Hergesheimer, Fannie Hurst Ring W. Lardner, Katherine Mans field, W. Somerset Maugham, Wilbu Daniel Steele, Booth Tarkington, Hugh Walpole, H. G. Wells, and Edith Wharton.

Professor Robinson's preface dis claims the "half-digested terminology" of the pedagogues. He seeks ultimate reality as the artist reveals it in "the portrayal of man's developing consciousness of himself among his contacts with life", and finds it most abundantly in the work he has chosen for his volume.

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"A Collection of Types of the Short tory" is the way William Thomson Iastings, A.M., Benjamin Crocker lough, Ph.D., and Kenneth Oliver Iason, A.M., describe their joint effort ı the subtitle to "Short Stories". hese scholarly authors resort to Tales from the Old French", Daniel )efoe, and a pack of notes to illustrate nd explain what they mean. Many mes and many literatures give up heir dead that they may be ticketed new. Alphonse Daudet lies beside ret Harte. James Stephens, James oyce, and Katherine Mansfield are ere. H. C. Bunner makes room for Iary E. Wilkins Freeman; Olive chreiner keeps a place for Henry ames; and Willa Cather and Edith Vharton are neighborly with John Iasefield and Lord Dunsany.

The notes in the back of the book abulate each story as being a "Story of Iystification", "Burlesque", "Story f Background and Atmosphere", or Story of Theme". This pleasant ositiveness is supplemented with bioraphical and interpretative comments pon the distinguished dead which are, ) say the least, safely within the tradion of American scholarship. The remarks upon the living have the distinction of being as insufferably dry as ıough the redoutable Professor Walter . Bronson of Brown University himelf had penned them. But this disnction is not wholly merited by the iligent seminarians who compiled Short Stories"; for, indeed, one learns ı the preface that the ghostly hand of rofessor Bronson himself was passed ı very fact over these — already — ıusty pages.

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he British Short Stories of 1924. Edited by Edward J. O'Brien and John Cournos. Small, Maynard and Co.
ces, A Collection of Short Stories. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
Twenty-three Stories by Twenty and Three Authors. D. Appleton and Co.
Contemporary Short Stories. Selected by Kenneth Allan Robinson. Houghton Mifflin Co.
Short Stories. Edited by William Thomson Hastings, Benjamin Crocker Clough, and Kenneth Oliver Mason. Houghton Mifflin Co.

## MR. ELLIS'S PARTING SHOTS

By Henry B. Fuller

ANNOUNCING this third volume of excerpts from his journals as the final one, Havelock Ellis, civilized, cultured, old, unhappy, the despairing well-wisher of a difficult and disappointing world, seems to intimate his retirement. "I have accommodated my arrangements to Death", he declares; and he would appear not unwilling to go.

The twentieth century — no wonder, perhaps — has proved too much for him. Bellona has dealt a dreadful stroke. He is as set against those who take war medals as against those who give them. His favorite period has been the age of Louis XIV — he is all for its "splendid exuberance and extravagances". That day, supplemented by the age of Elizabeth, with its "wild turbulence and humorous eccentricity and magnificent tragedy", quite satisfies him: since the seventeenth century, he maintains, there has been no great age. He indeed appears to accept Elie Faure's estimate of Napoleon as a great artist, a lyric poet in real life and a supreme dreamer. Yet while man is "for ever crushing within his heart all the tragedy and comedy of his long career, to express from them an essence of beauty", still our diarist is unable to apply this criterion to his own age. Such, apparently, must be the work of some

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younger man, aided by the idealizing cooperation resident in time. Mr. Ellis has sometimes been called "modern", he says; but there is nothing he desires less. "Some day, perhaps, our own Georgian Age will seem worth remembering. Heaven knows for what!" Possibly such an attitude characterizes rather the man who takes it than the period in which he is living.

Yet this damnable day of ours yields interests and pleasures. Art addresses us; and nature; and the stir of travel is active through the four years the present volume covers. One may fly to Paris, with its poignancy; one may sojourn in Athens, or at least recall such experiences. One may find the sea and the mountains in Cornwall and on the Riviera. One may run up to London for Elizabethan revivals or for the canvases of the Tate Gallery. . . . But a few notations, made decimally, will indicate the range of the present pages:

*Page 10.* — Bach compared with Beethoven.
*Page 20.* — Caliban and Ariel as opposing sides of the English character.
*Page 30.* — The Herd Instinct, as displayed during the Great War.
*Page 40.* — The dance of the sea — the play of waves and foam.
*Page 50.* — The landmarks of Cornish fields, with their phallic appeals to the generative sources of nature.
*Page 80.* — The long course of Egyptian culture.
*Page 100.* — The absurdity of the world as a spectacle.
*Page 150.* — Pain as the very texture of love.
*Page 200.* — Obscenity as a necessary element in genius; and the song and plumage of the birds. . . .

It is regrettable that this long continued series of comments and impressions should close on a harsh note; but it is probably unavoidable that one who writes frankly on almost all topics should here and there find himself misunderstood. We must remember that Mr. Ellis began as a physicia and that while the profession alwa has set its feet on the firm ground normality it has occasionally allowe them to wander off into the slidi muck of abnormality. The medi will sometimes touch on dubious topi — as in the above tabulation, whi was entered upon with no thought coloring the outcome; in which ca sympathetic understanding may fa Thus the last page of all records o author's indignation with the Canadia police inspectors who have lately be prosecuting somebody or other f "selling certain books in which I fe a very personal interest". So the it is.

However, the generous and unpre udiced reader will prefer to end on note of his own. He will not fail appreciation of an alert mind acute concerned through a wide range vital interests — a mind dedicated right and beauty, attached to t things of the spirit, and desirous of t best in a world of imperfection Every advanced society produces su natures, and sees to it, in the end, th they shall be unhappy. Our own da would seem to be especially apt that regard.

Impressions and Comments, Third a Final Series. By Havelock Ellis. Hou ton Mifflin Co.

## WHY ARE THEY STRIKING NOW?

By Charles R. Walker

THE jungle of books on labor (lar and small) is almost as thick an impenetrable as the forests of the ne fiction — and with fewer and less e tertaining guides. It takes no subt doctor of economics to point out th

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the labor problem, with its labyrinth of reference and its catholic way of touching all of us, is perhaps the hardest cross word puzzle we have to solve. But the practical help from literature for the man in the street — or the subway — is small. There are monographs on the cost of living from 1880 on, there are employers' panacea books, telling how happiness and harmony is to be achieved by putting in shop committees and drinking cups, and there are bogy books about the red menace. But to the perennial cry of the business man and the public, in the face of a new railway tie up or a fresh coal strike: "Why in hell are they striking now? And what can we do about it?" there has been little in the way of first aid to a puzzled public.

John Fitch in "The Causes of Industrial Unrest" has gone far to supply it, though that statement is by no means a full account of what the book achieves. He starts with the difficult eternal truth that men's instincts and desires are much alike, whether the individual be a miner or a member of the New York stock exchange. Each wants to get on, to be honored and respected, to have some fun, to be secure in his job, to see his children prosper. But the environment is different in the two cases. If you can know that environment, mental and physical, the aims, limitations, beliefs, ambitions, of the man, you can understand why his actions lead to the dynamiting of a bridge or the leadership of a national coal strike, though you may condemn both. So Fitch carefully limits his book to the conditions, economic, political, legal, industrial, psychological, out of which "industrial unrest" in its many forms arises. He touches on remedies — pills, splints, and purges — but primarily he is a diagnostician showing where the poison originates and why the patient acts as he does. The sources of unrest he puts for convenience under three heads: thus we have unrest rising from economic conditions, unrest arising from the struggle itself, and unrest arising from conflict with the government.

I have read a great many books on the labor problem, but can think of no single volume work that covers this field of conditions and causes in so rounded a fashion. Brilliancy, fresh thought are not here, but they are not attempted. Sound research and a philosophic temper are on every page, and they illuminate peculiarly those subjects that still radiate the fierce heat of controversy. The chapters dealing with "Opposition to Unions", "Company Towns", "Strikes", "The Policing of Strikes", are examples of the scientist treating violence in a laboratory calm.

Finally it can be stated, for the reader's comfort, that the book contains no theory of social utopia; it is, I should say, part of the literature of tolerance, a philosophic Baedeker for the long journey of industrial enlightenment.

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The Causes of Industrial Unrest. By John A. Fitch. Harper and Bros.

## DEEP SEA READING

By Arthur Mason

THE year 1924 has brought us many new books of the sea. In "Down to the Sea in Ships" Irvin Anthony gives us a swift, agreeable, and, sometimes, incomplete view of the inception and progress of shipping from the first times to the present. Historically there are a few important omissions both in ancient history and American progress. For example, no

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stress has been laid upon our relations with England and France in the early days. As a literary work the book is readable throughout, and it is really remarkable in places: here a paragraph of singular illumination, there a whole chapter, especially those on American fishing, American ports, and the English tea and wool clippers.

Joanna Colcord's "Roll and Go", with its fine introduction by her brother Lincoln Colcord and her own charming interpretations, accounts, and notes, is a classic of the days of sailormen that could have been written only by a real sailor, so full is it of the very spirit of the days of sailing ships. A real sailor Miss Colcord is; she neither emphasizes nor underdemonstrates the lives of sailormen. She simply plants their breath-of-life there on the printed page for readers of all time to pluck in perennial bloom. Truly, irrespective of its remarkable collection of chanties, "Roll and Go" is a book preeminent in its class, and richly deserves the place in history that is bound to come to it, both as a definite record of the forecastle life of our sailing ships, and as the first collection of the American songs of the sea. Let us hope that its success will be so pronounced as to call for a book of Miss Colcord's own recollections of the tall masts and those who sailed before them.

"Wooden Ships and Iron Men" by Frederick William Wallace possesses the combined and rare merit of being a splendidly arranged book of reference on British North American shipping from beginning to end of the era of wooden ships, and a chronicle of the outstanding incidents of those times. It can be recommended, therefore, to professional and literary readers alike. The application of a straightforward, easy style to a compilation of barnacled facts that would have defied anyone not used to untangling rope yarn, results in a praiseworthy publication.

The bluenose sailors were notoriously hard men who never gave in; the bluenose officers sometimes found themselves staved up through the practices of their "hell ships" when they didn't get there first; but the bluenose ships were beyond reproach always, and that was because they had real sailors, sailors who were sailors to command and to run them. Otherwise — well Old Ocean knows how those men fared who were no sailors. Iron men — oh yes, Old Ocean knows! To me the most appealing part of this book is the simple record of the ships that never came back. Anyone who reads the account of the voyage of the "Research", how rudder after rudder failed her on a trackless ocean, and how she was finally brought to port, will realize enough mentally to fill in the details of the struggle involved in the loss of every ship that never returned. Wallace's book is, indeed, a notable addition to the history of the sea.

Joseph Lewis French has edited a delightful anthology of stories showing in polished literary fashion the lives of sailormen of different sorts, and the varied face of different localities where sailormen find themselves. The only fault to find with the collection is that the title, "Sagas of the Seas", seems hardly to apply to so literary a work — there is a great deal that partakes of romance as well. However, as a title it is charming, the book is beautifully adorned, and any one of the stories it contains — especially Connolly's "The Race that Was" or the anonymous "Main-Truck" — is worth the price of the book, surrounded, as each contribution is, with other stories hardly less worthy of a reader's time.

In the compilation of Charles Boardman Hawes's posthumous "Whaling",

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Mrs. Hawes has added to its intrinsic merit a rare appreciation and interpretation. These attributes are expressed with a charm that distinguishes her work among those books which treat of the grim and adventurous ages of sail. The volume is also perhaps the most exhaustive study of its kind in existence. Highest praise of all — it has completely delighted one old sailor of the days when the merchant marine which was our world scorned, as Mrs. Hawes herself says, those who hunted the whale for their slack and untidy ways, and took no count of their singular heroism! It made me wish that such as I were eligible for her bluebacked volume, wherein the melancholy skipper of the "Minnesota" stuck out years of torment for the sake of his honest livelihood, and the heroes of the Arctic jam gave up their livelihood cheerfully to fetch their comrades home. Never again shall I boast that I have never been a-whaling!

To those who go through life hugging the curb, I would recommend "Seamen All". If their blood doesn't start speeding up their spine, and they don't ask Providence why they waited so long to be born, why, I miss my guess. This is another of E. Keble Chatterton's picture histories, as smoothly finished as one of Charles R. Patterson's paintings of the sea and if anything more difficult to produce, dependent as it is for quality upon his power to fill in gaps around a subject that consists of parts of all puzzle shapes and sizes which have to be pretty much left as he has found them in the volumes of his research, yet all transferred to one canvas. That the author is equal to the occasion, his previous mosaics of the sea have borne ample testimony. They are all very readable and above everything else clear; they form, with this new book, a library that everyone interested in the sea should have upon his shelves.

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Down to the Sea in Ships. By Irvin Anthony. Penn Publishing Co.
Roll and Go, Songs of American Sailormen. Compiled by Joanna C. Colcord. Bobbs-Merrill Co.
Wooden Ships and Iron Men. By Frederick William Wallace. George Sully and Co.
Sagas of the Seas. By American Writers. Edited by Joseph Lewis French. Dial Press.
Whaling. By Charles Boardman Hawes. Doubleday, Page and Co.
Seamen All. By E. Keble Chatterton. Little, Brown and Co.

## YORICK — WITH A DASH OF ARIEL

By Arthur Bartlett Maurice

IT was Edmund Clarence Stedman who first called Eugene Field Yorick, and Mr. Dennis, in endorsing the fitness of the name, adds "but with a dash of Ariel — when he was not Mercutio". Whatever the particular Shakespearian intonation, it has always carried with it a recognition of the fine mediæval or Elizabethan quality of Field's intellectual roistering. There was the flavor of the past in the other appellations linked with Field's name and fame. According to his own frequent mock-heroic characterization he was "the Chicago Dante". Quite seriously critics have called him "the children's laureate", "the children's Shakespeare", sometimes "the children's Chaucer". But it is the man Field whom Mr. Dennis aims to present in these pages, the man "who lived so merrily and yet so broodingly; who faced fate so lightheartedly and courageously; who combated his natural loneliness so persist-

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ently and who wrought with his pen so brilliantly and sympathetically".

One of Eugene Field's many accomplishments was his faculty of inventing the most impossible news stories and writing them up with such apparent sincerity, such solemn faced gravity, and such a minuteness of detail, that most readers gulped them gaspingly but without doubt. It is what the French call *pince-sans-rire*. Once he concocted a most outrageously ridiculous story about Prince Alexander of Bulgaria. Had the story been given baldly the hoax would have been obvious to the most gullible of readers; but turned and twisted in Field's dexterous hands, embellished by figures and supported by names and addresses, it was made at last to seem extraordinary but true. Labouchère printed it solemnly in London "Truth", adding some comment of his own. Field was delighted.

Perhaps, in calling Field Yorick, Edmund Clarence Stedman had his own experience in mind. Once the poet was to visit Chicago as a guest of the Twentieth Century Club, and Field found the usual opportunity to give vent to his spirits. He drew a circumstantial and dramatic picture of the excitement which the prospective visit was arousing in Chicago literary circles. He told picturesquely but solemnly of certain wonderful preparations that were being made. There was to be a great banquet. The honored guest was to be conducted from the railway station by a giant procession, and Field was able to announce authoritatively the following order of march:

Twenty Police Officers Afoot.

The Grand Marshal, horseback, accompanied by ten male members of the Twentieth Century Club, also horseback.

Mr. Stedman in a landau drawn by four horses, two black and two white.

The Twentieth Century Club in carriages.

A brass band afoot.

The Robert Browning Club in Frank Parmelee's 'buses.

The Homer clubs afoot, preceded by a fife and drum corps, and a real Greek philosopher attired in a tunic.

Another brass band.

A beautiful young woman playing a guitar, symbolizing Apollo and his lute, in a car drawn by nine milk-white stallions, impersonating the Muses.

Two hundred Chicago poets afoot.

The Chicago Literary Club in carriages.

Magnificent advertising car of Armour and Co. illustrating the progress of civilization.

The Fishbladder Brigade and the Blue Island Avenue Shelley Club.

The Fire Department.

Another brass band.

Citizens in carriages, afoot and horseback.

Advertising cars and wagons.

At first reading Mr. Stedman, panic-stricken, was on the point of canceling his visit.

In somewhat similar vein was the famous bit of humor written by Field about Francis Wilson's legs. The gifted comedian first became a stage celebrity with the production of "Erminie", in a part which he played not only with his head and heart but also conspicuously with his legs. Of the legs Field wrote:

> They are twins, yet totally unlike, reminding one of a well-mated man and wife, who are so very different that we speak of them as well matched. The left leg is apparently of a serious turn, as may be observed on all occasions requiring a portrayal of those emotions which bespeak elevated thought and philosophic tendencies. The right leg is mercurial, ubiquitous, passionate to a marked degree, whimsical, fantastic, and grotesque. The contrast between the two gives us a comedy in itself which is very pleasing; for the constant struggle between the perennial levity of the right leg and the melancholy demeanor of the left leg is funnier by far than most of the horse-play which passes for comedy in these times.

Again there was that tremendous story of Alaskan adventure which Field used to tell at the expense of

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another actor friend, Stuart Robson. According to the tale, Robson once taught a Sunday School class in Alaska. One winter day he took the dear little children out riding in a sled. When far from civilization they were pursued by a pack of ferocious wolves. With rare presence of mind the resourceful Robson, while whipping his horses to their utmost speed, threw out one child after another to the terrible beasts, which stopped long enough to devour each child in turn. Very properly, he threw out first the wicked little boy who never had dropped any pennies into the plate at Sunday School. After the last child had been thrown to the wolves, the good Mr. Robson reached town in safety.

We are inclined to associate Field exclusively with Chicago, on account of his long years of service there with the "Daily News", and his "Sharps and Flats" column in that newspaper. But he was born in St. Louis, brought up in Amherst, Massachusetts, and began his newspaper career as a reporter on the St. Louis "Evening Journal". Thence he went to St. Joseph as city editor of the St. Joseph "Gazette"; returned to St. Louis as editorial paragraphist on the "Journal" and "Times-Journal"; was managing editor in turn of the Kansas City "Times" and of the Denver "Tribune". With the last named paper was associated the famous "Tribune Primer". He had had ten years of active journalism before he went to Chicago and the "Daily News" in August, 1883. It was Melville E. Stone who lured him to Chicago with an offer of fifty dollars a week, the prospect of a higher salary as a reward for effective service, and the promise that he should be permitted to write precisely what he pleased, subject to reasonable editorial supervision.

Field married, at twenty three, a girl of sixteen. His married life throughout was exceedingly happy, but he must have been a trying husband. That he recognized the fact is indicated by one of his favorite stories — a story usually told with much elaboration and never twice in the same way. It related how in a dream he died and went to heaven, where he encountered many interesting persons of past ages. The conversations he had with them were surprising enough, but the one of chief interest was with that amiable but sorely tried patriarch, Job. After a little improving exchange of ideas Field complimented his ancient companion upon his long established and well deserved reputation for patience. Thereupon the venerable spirit heaved a profound sigh. "It is true", said Job, "that for a long time I enjoyed quite a reputation for being patient, but now I have had to take a back seat. You see, there's a woman in Chicago — name's Mrs. Eugene Field — who has proved herself to be a lot patienter than I."

Mr. Dennis offers a concrete illustration. One evening as Field and his wife were starting to call at a friend's house, Mrs. Field chanced to remark that she wished she had put on a better dress. A moment later they boarded a street car. While Field stopped at the door to pay the fares Mrs. Field moved to the front of the car and sat down. Field fumbled in his pocket for a coin, found it, drew it forth, and, as he handed it to the conductor, said in a deep voice plainly audible to all the occupants of the car: "I wish to pay the fare not only of myself but of that beautiful lady in the exquisite and costly gown whom you see sitting yonder." Having thus drawn all eyes critically to the dress which Mrs. Field wished she had not worn, Field was perfectly happy.

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Mr. Dennis has given a vivid picture of Field's acrobatic attitude when writing — his feet on his desk and his tablet and paper either at his side or, more often, on his lap. Thus established to his liking, he wrote steadily and rapidly, chuckling every now and then as some quaint fancy developed under his pen. When it had been transferred to paper he would read it aloud, to enable his fastidious ear to apply its test. The regulation three sheets of paper having been filled with his extremely fine handwriting, Field's feet came promptly down from the top of his desk, his elbows were squared to place the sheets in order, and he would emit a loud, provocative, "Oh, well!" That was his daily declaration of release from labor.

Field's normal working day in the "Daily News" office was about two hours. He was able to accomplish so much in so short a time because of his many and diverse activities elsewhere throughout most of the day and also most of the night. He was gathering material for his column when he lingered in old bookshops, when he met his actor friends at or after the theatre, and when he read or wrote late at night. He even had the faculty of turning to account the visits of bores, who took up a good deal of his time when he could not escape them. His production was little short of amazing. At one period he dazzled his readers with the number as well as the beauty of his verses. In the week beginning July 15, 1889 he filled his column every day with nothing but poems of his own, and there was a formidable reserve supply of verse on his desk. That was the period when Field the poet was finding himself.

To Mr. Dennis's book the reader is referred for the pictures of the later years, the friendships formed with men of letters in England, the prowlings among the old bookshops of London, the experiences on the Continent which furnished him with themes for so many of his poems. Much has been written about Eugene Field, yet "Eugene Field's Creative Years" is unquestionably the most important contribution to the subject since the appearance of "Eugene Field", the Slason Thompson biography of twenty two years ago.

Eugene Field's Creative Years. By Charles H. Dennis. Doubleday, Page and Co.

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# IN BRIEF REVIEW

SOME of the sketches in "Distressing Dialogues" (Harper) are monologues; some are diatribes; and the rest are truly dialogues, in our opinion more amusing than distressing. The author, Nancy Boyd, who is revealed in a sly copyright notice as no other than Edna St. Vincent Millay, has let her wit and humorous observation play over a dozen phases of social folly: Greenwich Village, Americans, marriage, superstitions, Greek dancing, and modern woman in search of beauty (the kind that comes high in a shop). Here is wit for wit's sake, as sponsored by "Vanity Fair". One may safely leave such a book on the library table when the Advance Club meets for tea and literary discussion. Unlike some of those unpleasant foreign publications, it will not shock the less "advanced" members, and it is subtle enough to charm even the local authority on Michael Arlen. In short, it gives the reader a flattering sense of his own sophistication and cleverness. Perhaps it has a bit too much of that gossamer charm that distinguishes the flippant monthly where it first appeared, to share even a small portion of the permanence that belongs to the poetry of Nancy Boyd's familiar. But it does clothe the bony frame of our meagre civilization in pleasant seductiveness, and possesses more humor and truth to life than most light satires of the fashionable and literary world.

When the reader finishes "The Coasts of Illusion" (Harper) by Clark B. Firestone, he may well exclaim with Marco Polo: "And something I learned of the ways of man." "Coasts of Illusion", as glimpsed here, are nowhere the shores of the supernatural, but they are seen through the haze of distance and the obscurity of time. Mr. Firestone laments the fact that the frontiers of ignorance have been pushed back so far that the never-never lands have dropped off into the sea, so he summons again the countries and creatures of legend, and binds them between the covers of a book which veritably merits the hackneyed words "fascinating" and "alluring". The imaginative reader is fascinated by the stuff of this strange volume and lured, with never a thought of the morrow, through mysterious realms of fact and fancy, encountering dragons, satyrs, pigmies, merfolk, Amazons, albinos, heroes, and other "peoples of prodigy" who have given zest and color to the world's yesterdays. The librarian will find it difficult to catalogue "The Coasts of Illusion", for history, geography, mythology, science, anthropology, and folk lore are drawn together by the golden thread of imagination and woven inextricably by the story teller's art.

One's first impulse upon finding the famous Trotsky discoursing of "culture", "cultured speech", and the necessity of good manners, is to cite Gilbert's estimate of the winsome, amiable ways of the coster when he's finished jumping on his mother. But that, of course, is unfair: however one may differ as to their applications of it, it is simply silly to deny that the Bolshevist leaders have a truly constructive aspiration, and that they have got hold of the tail of a dynamic idea in their assertion that a "reconstruction of human-



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ity" is necessary. Most of us are sure that they are going about it in an altogether wrong way, but one must grant their sincerity of purpose. A most interesting, if very scrappy, presentation of that side of present day Bolshevism is given in "Problems of Life" (Doran) by L. Trotsky, translated by Z. Vengerova, with an introduction by N. Minsky. It is made up of incidental papers, of diverse quality, treating of "habit and custom", of vodka, the cinema, the church, and, more importantly, of the family, the communal education of children, the "emancipation" of women from domestic drudgery by the communal kitchen, and a score of minor matters, down to politeness and the abuses of profanity. The underlying idea is that, having won "political" freedom, the "proletariat" must now learn not only to read and write but how to become skilled workmen: and, above all, how to rearrange marriage and the care of children in accordance with Communist ideals. Trotsky frankly recognizes past mistakes and failures. Perhaps his real, chief point is that the upbuilding process must, of necessity, be slow: he neither expects nor promises any miracles. His manner is mild, gently argumentative, though there are flashes of more ardent expression here and there. It is, of course, all conditioned upon the acceptance of Communist doctrine as a foundation. But it serves, at least, to show Trotsky himself in a light unfamiliar to most American readers.

Strange, myopic Lafcadio Hearn! There is much in "Lafcadio Hearn's American Days" (Dodd, Mead) for which he would not thank the author, but for those very chapters of an inquisitive soul exploring life's stranger nooks and crannies the reader is humbly grateful. Edward Larocque Tinker has made no effort to fashion a halo for the strange combination of a dozen racial heritages, but in a most engaging manner sets forth the influence of an unorthodox existence upon Hearn's literary output. It is a romantic book, as exciting in its story as most novels, and much better written. Tinker may not have an unbiased judgment of Hearn as a litterateur, but he gives a biography that could stand on its own legs were it written about an unknown.

Zane Grey's "Tales of Southern Rivers" (Harper), a group of vivid and enviable reminiscences relating the author's fishing and hunting experiences in remote tropical waters, should prove a delight to the ardent sportsman of rod and gun. They are told with the novelist's faculty for rugged descriptive writing at its best. The generous addition of over eighty excellent photographs, secured in action afloat and ashore, lends an authentic and illuminating quality which enhances the pleasant intimacy one feels in following the text. The book is a worthy companion to the non-fiction works of this type by Mr. Grey which have preceded it.

Columnists needn't be brilliant. In "So Much Velvet" (Doubleday, Page) the cheerful Franklin P. Adams sustains so sufficiently a pleasing ratio of amusing things to the unstirring ones that he is readily acceptable. F. P. A., like Jo Jo the Dog Faced Boy, Pat Rooney, and Herriman, has become an institution by simply being himself for satisfactory stretches. His daily Conning Tower is never without one redeeming boob bomb. In this latest collection of his observations there are some nice things as well as some very dreary dirges indeed. A conscientious

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performer, he always tries. In some of his numbers he tries too hard. But when a journalistic mountebank has to turn handsprings daily with new stumblings he'd be in a bad way if he didn't appear dogged sometimes. Then too, as he probably has discovered, an occasional civilized subtlety has a way of emerging through the saddest orchestral bombast — when least hoped for. Such as have presented themselves to F. P. A. have been restrained lovingly. The only really offensive thing about "So Much Velvet" is the wrapper. Can it be that F. P. A. has taken to owl delineation?

Mary Caroline Crawford knows how to write about New England in general, and about Boston in particular. With a shelf of good books to her credit, she stands firm in the assumption that the lure of the antique runs deeper than the casual whim of the collector. "None of us", she avers in her foreword to the new edition of "Old Boston Days and Ways" (Little, Brown) "wish the Boston of the twentieth century to be merely a museum." And indeed there would be little danger of that if all chroniclers had Miss Crawford's fine perception and her ability to link up the past with the present. "Old Boston Days and Ways" deals with Boston's history as a town, and carries it through the "formative period" when its peculiar genius was beginning to express itself in art, in politics, and in civic life. The new edition is illustrated with carefully chosen prints and engravings, wholly in keeping with the tone of the book, and a welcome contrast to the conventional photographs one usually finds in such volumes.

The field of modern Italian literature, too little known to most Americans, is charmingly opened to the view by Ruth Shepard Phelps through the medium of "Italian Silhouettes" (Knopf). About a dozen graceful essays tell of the lives and works of as many poets and novelists, and criticize searchingly the quality of their individual product. The writer has a rare power of brief and subtle characterization. Thus she calls Giosuè Carducci "the eternal adolescent", denominates Pascoli "the poet of very little things" who lived in "a child's world" and "did not so much believe in religion as enjoy it". Of Papini she declares that "his native woodnote is a wild triumphant cackle". And how is this for a summary of Pirandello's method: "The protagonist seems to be one of the 'persistent problems of philosophy'"? Her account of the women writers — Annie Vivanti and others — is noteworthy for its insight into the feminist aspect of their works.

One expects, in books purporting to give glimpses of foreign lands, comparisons of the virtues of the good old U. S. A. and the undesirable qualities of the country under the scrutinizing microscope. That sort of thing seems to be quite *au fait* and has brought no little prominence to many — may their tribe decrease! But here is an iconoclast who disdains derogation and refrains from annoying comment. Harry A. Franck, while meandering through Japan and Formosa, forgot politics, and the relative merits of heathen and Christian religions. He was able to see the humorous side of everything, even the most distressing incident. And his taste is that of a connoisseur; he chooses his material with an artistic appreciation of picturesque commonplace that is unhampered by philosophy. Here are no stilted observations, but lively human snapshots of life as

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lived by the Joneses and Smiths and Browns of Japan and Formosa. Exit the intriguing politician and the fanatical high priest, and enter the bourgeoisie, with the homely eccentricities as common to every people as the provincialisms of the national tongue. It can be truly said of "Glimpses of Japan and Formosa" (Century) that its glimpses ring true and, in so far as the lay mind can tell, are faithful reproductions of Far Eastern life.

The operagoer who would dispense with librettos, or else enrich his memory through the eyes of another, has two new books to choose from. Mary Fitch Watkins is good reading for him who does not take his opera too seriously. We relish her description of the opening scene of "André Chénier", in which "one lackey with a baritone voice addresses a blue sofa which he has just turned around, and is quite severe with it for the shameless flirtations which it has countenanced". But though the style is delightfully unconventional, the subject matter of "First Aid to the Opera-Goer" (Stokes) is thoroughly orthodox. The forty two works described are by choice "those old operas which endure from year to year in every company's prospectus, and those 'novelties' which have proved their worth by surviving more than a tentative season or two". On the other hand, those included by Mabel Wagnalls in "Opera and Its Stars" (Funk, Wagnalls) are intended primarily to supplement her stories of stars who have achieved success in the various rôles. There are interviews with the inevitable four — Galli-Curci, Jeritza, Mary Garden, Geraldine Farrar — and with prima donnas better known to the generation preceding. Discussion of Farrar leads naturally to an analysis of "Carmen", Sembrich brings thoughts of the unfamilia "Semiramide", and so on. Wherea "First Aid to the Opera-Goer" con fines itself to discussion of the plot there is here an attempt to show th relation between music and action We learn of "Celeste Aïda" that "lik all love-songs it is legato, andante, an pianissimo, but at the same time notice ably original and characteristic", whic seems not very helpful. To illustrat the difference in viewpoint betwee these two books, we quote parallel pas sages in the description of "Aïda". A Miss Wagnalls put it:

> Like an electric flash from a sultry sk does the entrance of Aïda affect the musica atmosphere. At sight of the beautiful cap tive, Amneris again rages with jealousy, a is plainly indicated by the conflictin themes in the orchestra. With subtle de vices the Princess seeks to entrap her rival She pretends a deep sympathy for Aïda' grief over the vanquished Ethiopians, an adds that "Egypt also has cause to mourn for our brave leader, Rhadames, is amon the slain." This treacherous falsehood i foisted so suddenly that Aïda loses cautio and reveals her emotion. Amneris crie out in fury: "Tremble, slave! thy secre is discovered!" She informs Aïda tha Rhadames lives, and that she, Pharaoh' daughter, loves the hero and "will no brook the rivalry of a slave!"

According to Miss Watkins:

> Here is the gloomy Aïda, bringing Amneris' crown. The princess wants to try a little strategy, so she sends every one else away, and then sweetly announces to Aïda that Rhadames has been killed. The devoted girl pales under her *café-au-lait*, and Amneris, hissing unpleasantly, "Ha, I thought so!" declares the perfect futility of Aïda's passion. "A mere slave, ridiculous! I, the princess, love the man!"

How Miss Watkins must revel in the current production of "The Firebrand"!

"It was Dickens who discovered London as the abode of the old and the quaint, and Stevenson in his 'New Arabian Nights' who invented the romantic possibilities of London Streets.

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It was Whistler who discovered London as a city of fugitive, mysterious beauty", but it remained for E. V. Lucas to delight thousands of readers with "A Wanderer in London" (Macmillan), which appears now in its twenty third edition. Mr. Lucas knows his London well and is as much at home at Whitechapel or the Zoo as in Mayfair or the Tate Gallery. This new edition, of what is perhaps the most popular in the celebrated "Wanderer" series, should replace all others, since the "flood of bricks and mortar" is still upon the city, and no sooner does Regent Street give up the ghost than Charing Cross Station contemplates a jump across the Thames. "Bit by bit old London vanishes!" If the reader, or traveler, prefers a more casual tour than that mapped out by Mr. Lucas, let him turn to Helen W. Henderson's 'A Loiterer in London" (Doran). This attractive volume, embellished with the best of photographs, catches the essential spirit of London, and is a book to be read from beginning to end, even though the reader must do his loitering in front of the study fire. It may, however, serve as the necessary spur to travel, for London, claims Miss Henderson, is the only "real" place in the world; "to arrive here is to achieve the grand destination".

After the manifold illustrations of Russian eccentricities given by Maxim Gorky in the collection of sketches entitled "Fragments from My Diary" (McBride), he reflects: "Am I quite certain that I want these people to become different? However foreign all nationalism, patriotism and other diseases of the spirit may be to me, my vision of the Russian people as exceptionally, fantastically gifted and uncommon, does not fail me. Even the fools in Russia are peculiarly foolish, foolish in a way of their own, just as the sluggards have a genius of their own." Could there be a more comprehensive or convincingly truthful vision of the enigmatic Russian? If anything at all has been demonstrated by the repeated attempts of foreigners to describe and interpret him, it is that he remains incomprehensible to the non-Russian. Hence, if we are ever to understand, the interpretation must come from an experienced Russian whose vision is capable of some measure of detachment. Gorky perhaps comes nearer than any other to attaining such detachment: he is still of them, thoroughly Russian himself, but also capable of somehow standing a bit aloof. It is hardly necessary to say of these varied sketches that they are brilliantly done — some of them raw, intentionally raw, splashes of color, savage, unrestrained; others delicate even to sentimentality; and still others humorous, or subtly philosophical. It was demonstrated long ago that Gorky can write: that he can be a master artist. It seems also to be true in his case that less evaporates in the process of translation than with most Russian writers. The name of the translator is not given, but this version is in excellent English, thoroughly alive, and with nothing of the air of the difficultly made rendering that mars so much translating. The three dozen sketches range widely, both in time and place: there is a glimpse of the revolution, "some views on the war", a note on Tolstoy, and a disquisition on "atheism, marriage and dancing". But for the most part they are vivid outline drawings of characters, tragic, comic to burlesque, pathetic, brutal — all sorts and conditions of men and women. They are emphatically Russian yet they are, also entirely, certainly human.

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# THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

*Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, i Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America*

*It is one thing to write a book and get it published; it is quite another thing to get any considerable number of persons to read it. Witness the titles in the December Monthly Score. Why do "The Enchanted Hill", "East of the Setting Sun", and "The Old Ladies" come newly into the Score rather than three books by three other authors? Reflecting upon them, one is moved to suggest to the young authors who are trying to scale Parnassus by the aid of divers ingenious devices of rhetoric, innuendo, or shock, that they attempt, for a change, the simple and time tried method of telling an interesting story interestingly. Should any demand the recipe for that art, let them sit for a season at the feet of America's greatest story teller, whose "Autobiography" holds a deserved first place in this month's general list.—F. P. S.*

N.B.—*We were a trifle premature last month in dismissing the perdurable H. G. Wells. Apparently there are still a few million Americans who have only just heard of the "Outline".*

## FICTION

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | The Little French Girl | *Anne Douglas Sedgwick* | HOUGHTO |
| 2. | So Big | *Edna Ferber* | DOUBLEDA |
| 3. | The White Monkey | *John Galsworthy* | SCRIBNE |
| 4. | Rugged Water | *Joseph C. Lincoln* | APPLETO |
| 5. | Rose of the World | *Kathleen Norris* | DOUBLEDA |
| 6. | The Green Hat | *Michael Arlen* | DORA |
| 7. | The Plastic Age | *Percy Marks* | CENTUR |
| 8. | Peacock Feathers | *Temple Bailey* | PEN |
| 9. | The Enchanted Hill* | *Peter B. Kyne* | COSMOPOLITA |
| 10. | East of the Setting Sun* | *George Barr McCutcheon* | DOD |
| 11. | A Gentleman of Courage | *James Oliver Curwood* | COSMOPOLITA |
| 12. | The Old Ladies* | *Hugh Walpole* | DORA |

## GENERAL

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|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Mark Twain's Autobiography | *Samuel L. Clemens* | HARPE |
| 2. | Saint Joan | *George Bernard Shaw* | BRENTAN |
| 3. | Life of Christ | *Giovanni Papini* | HARCOUR |
| 4. | My Garden of Memory | *Kate Douglas Wiggin* | HOUGHTON |
| 5. | Ariel: The Life of Shelley | *André Maurois* | APPLETON |
| 6. | Life and Letters of Walter H. Page | *Burton J. Hendrick* | DOUBLEDAY |
| 7. | Etiquette | *Emily Post* | FUNK, WAGNALL |
| 8. | The New Decalogue of Science | *Albert Edward Wiggam* | BOBB |
| 9. | The Outline of History | *H. G. Wells* | MACMILLA |
| 10. | The Dance of Life | *Havelock Ellis* | HOUGHTON |
| 11. | From Immigrant to Inventor | *Michael Pupin* | SCRIBNER |
| 12. | Galápagos: World's End | *William Beebe* | PUTNAM |

*This title has not before appeared in the Monthly Score.



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# FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

## *We Have With Us*

THERE is scarcely a vocable in the English language the etymology of which is simpler or more alluring than that of "interest". It comes from the Latin *inter* (with, among) and *esse* (to be). Or to get at the matter more directly, "interest" is merely the third person singular of the Latin verb for "to be" with the humble preposition "inter" prefixed. That interests me which is with me.

I am, for example, at this moment not at all concerned about or interested in the water system of Scranton. That the drinking water of what is momentarily my home town is taken directly from the not exactly majestic river that flows by this town, that it is vigorously dosed with chlorine, that it smells to the borders of adjacent states, and that I have to pay $1.25 a month for the necessity of using it, locally and on the inside — this is of interest to me. My home town water is with me. Or, I lend a man a dollar and he pays me six cents for the use of it. The latter I call my interest, for that is all that is with me: the other man has the dollar.

The fascinating feature of this principle, however, rests in the reassuring fact that it works both ways: the man who does not have a dollar can easily be persuaded to take an interest in one. And what does any man do while drinking bad water? He visualizes to himself some far off fount at the foot of a tree-clad hill from which water clear as crystal, cool, refreshing, altogether delightful, gushes forth to the eternal reinvigorating of man and all his animal colleagues.

Now, I cheerfully grant that after years of trial and error, I do not understand the publisher mind. Approach one of our publishers with the remark that here is a foreign work which you know is a great and good one (and you are aware that the publisher is not in a position to know this), and he turns in his swivel chair, which means turning on you, looks over his glasses, and makes a set speech of the following contents: "This is obviously a splendid piece of work, but I fear that our readers would not be interested in it."

And yet, of the eight books we have with us this month there is only one which, by the most generous stretch of the imagination, could be said to be of interest to the American people on the basis of the true etymology of "interest". That is Fredrika Bremer's "Letters", written seventy years ago and containing admirable sketches of us at a time when the leading topic of conversation was slavery and what should be done about it.

Of what does our monthly menu consist? Of precious little that is already with us: An Italian scholar who resembles the typical American scholar probably less than he resembles any other human type, writes twenty six essays on twenty five European poets, no one of whom, with the exceptions of Heine, Schiller, Ibsen, and Scott, has an American following and some of whom, such as Monti, Giusti, and Werner, are now destined to be heard of for the first



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time. We have also the memoirs — according to the prefatory note — of an admirable, ugly, Catholic, sentimental Don Juan. The letters of a Swedish woman who studied us just as we were on the brink of a social and political revolution. Six plays by Molière, all written in the seventeenth century, translated long before this, published heretofore on various occasions, three of which would never be discovered today were it not known that a Molière wrote them. A novel on the life of miners in France, written forty years ago, also published long since elsewhere, and admittedly strong enough but not a picture of mining as it is done today. Infinite chitchat about cats and dogs. Five tales from Flanders that outdo in their forthright bestiality anything that ever took place in this country in which one fourth as many people are killed outright every year as make up the entire kingdom of little but mighty Denmark. And still more fairy tales from Norway, laid in our lap just as our football season is at its height.

Consequently, on the ground of *inter-est*, it would never have occurred to me to go to a single one of our publishers with a single one of these books except Fröken Bremer's. And for this very reason I believe I begin to see the light: Our publishers have obviously put their heads together and agreed that in the bringing out of foreign works, they are morally and æsthetically bound to select thoughts, pictures, lives, discussions, tales, and so on such as we never had and have no prospect of having. To this principle it would be audacious and injudicious to take exception. We have, by way of illustration, whole libraries of cat-and-dog literature but nothing like that of Colette who, the jacket informs us, is Colette Willy. — I so dislike the thought of calling a strange woman by her first name.

Due to my own intellectual indigence, much of Signor Croce's big book means nothing to me but so many hours of boredom; for what is duller and more inane than literary criticism of a writer whose life is a sealed pamphlet and whose works we have never read? There is Berchet, for example; Foscolo; Caballero. And out of Croce's twenty five heroes any other American can draw his dummy. I have never yet known a man of any nationality who knows much. But if I personally do not know more about Zacharias Werner than Benedetto Croce reveals in this essay on him, then I should have been failed in a certain German course I took nearly a quarter of a century ago. It is peculiar about the way the big fellows persist in taking chances.

With Walter Scott this is all different. Croce has evidently read his Scott; and he has come to the conclusion that when Sir Walter wiped out the grand debt by his novel series he proved that he was a good business man but a poor poet. I do not know even yet why it is impossible for me to enjoy "Ivanhoe". But now that the ex-Minister of Education in Italy makes the same confession, by implication, we may consider the case closed.

I once heard Bishop Herbert Shipman, in a sermon to a post of the American Legion, say that he could understand without difficulty why the Lord made a sheep, a sheep that has wool on its back and meat on its bones; but he could not understand what point the Lord had in view in creating some men he knew, for they were so utterly good-for-nothing. In very truth the Marquis who saunters along through del Valle-Inclan's life, real and alleged, is not nearly so useful a member of so-

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ciety, as we appraise society in this country, as a good sheep would be. The uses that can be made of wool are many, and mutton is delectable if well done. But after all, there is that far off spring at the very thought of which our mouth waters. This contribution from Spain is interesting to us: it is well written, piquant and picturesque. Moreover, the old Marquis actually fancies that he is of heroic stature. It is always interesting to watch a man who cajoles himself into believing that he is something that he is not, and we have whole Yalensian Bowls of that type with us.

Goethe said once that the reading of one or two of Molière's plays each year was an integral part of general culture. But Goethe also said: "Wieland's 'Oberon' will be admired and read as a masterpiece of artistic creation so long as gold remains gold, crystal crystal, and poetry poetry." Wieland's "Oberon" is read today by about one German out of ten thousand once in ten years and it is not read by non-Germanic peoples at all. Let us forever be on our guard against sweeping statements by the great. Moreover, "Les Précieuses Ridicules" is translated here by "The High-Brow Ladies". Curtis Hidden Page rendered the title by "The Affected Misses". Why could it not be translated as "The Ridiculous Preciouses"? What does a man call his sweetheart but his "precious"? I believe that Molière's La Grange, Croisy, and even Almanzor would accept this rendering, while Mlles. Madelon and Cathos themselves could certainly not enter a demurrer. But do this, and some self appointed critic who never translated a word in his life and who knows nothing about the business of translating will shriek: "Ah, that is not idiomatic!"

Every sentence of Fredrika Bremer's "Letters" is worth the careful study of every American: her interest in this country was foreign, and she saw it as we cannot see it. To me, one of her most valuable letters is the one that bears the date line, "Charlottesville, Va., June 26". There she heard two university students deliver "orations". The first one was so full of fatuous praise of all things southern that she wrote: "I left the hall very much depressed. . . . I have scarcely any desire to go and hear the other speaker." This country will have made a colossal spiritual advance as soon as the last native shall have rid himself of this speech: "This is the greatest, grandest, and most glorious country on the face of the earth."

When I read Capital propaganda it makes me long to become a Socialist with an anarchistic penchant; when I read Labor stuff I long for personal millions and a seat among the obstructionistic capitalists. But when I read Zola's "Germinal" with its powerful, at times even brutal, bestial, savage picture of miners and mining in France in the early Eighties, I get the entire picture without the jaundiced prejudice. Old Etienne Lantier stalks through the whole tale committing and suffering wrongs, but whose wrongs are they? They are the depradations of civilization. Zola is an artist from whom our plush covered podium and soap box orators might learn by turns.

Such a book as "Cats, Dogs and I" fails to impress me — which may be my fault. There are a few good things in it, particularly in the chapter entitled "The Zoological Garden", written at Antwerp in the spring of 1914, and in those passages where the butterfly is referred to as a "feathery flower", though even in this I sense a bit of nature faking. Moreover, I feel that in such an expression as

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"these beautiful, sanguinary princes of the earth" there is a measure of affectation, for it is hard to be natural when imputing royalty to lions, tigers 'n everything.

No American ever wrote such tales as Verhaeren's; and we never had an American artist of the temperament of Frans Masereel. The publisher has consequently done well to bring out this book in unique format and distinctive coloring. The "Inn of Gentle Death" should do much by way of showing how the old order really passeth, while the "Horse Fair at Opdorp", where the unbroken jades run off with the hearse and set the town, in which the fair is being held, in consternation such as we do not know with all our noise cult, reminds me of one of the first motion pictures I ever saw: An old fire horse had been superannuated and sold to a milk dealer. As he was standing one day along the curb while the pasteurized product was being placed in the hallways, the fire bell rang. It was too much for Dobbin's upbringing. Away he galloped strewing the street with milk, canned, bottled, and loose. This was a typical American picture. Verhaeren's tales are impressionistic, and of the Belgians Belgic.

A fairy tale is something for the youngish mind. Certain of these Asbjörnsen and Moe creations, however, I had to read twice before the point became obvious to my oldish mind. Even "Kari Wooden-Skirt" did not fling its full meaning into my soul without effort on my part. There is an excess of words in it about the precious metals, the bull whose left ear serves as a combination linen closet and butler's pantry. And a skirt made of Norwegian poplar! Is that fairy-like? It is, in a country where fresh water pirates used to sail up the *vik*, or creek, and make their hauls from the private stores of the inland householders. The term "viking" had an appalling connotation then, and the Norwegians have never completely recovered from that sensation.

Each country has its own standard. There are no pampered Eskimos. German literature, even in the case of Goethe, is densely populated with Fräuleins who are *gross, schlank, schmächtig* (tall, slender, languishing). That is the type of girl a German is interested in; for it is the type he does not have. Nine out of ten German girls are short, fat, pragmatic. The things that interest us most are frequently, if not generally, the things we do not have with us. By the time this is published my home town will have a water supply — a new source has been tapped at great cost — that will outrival in its purity Rome's. Our interest in such water was aroused by our utter lack of it.

ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD

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European Literature in the Nineteenth Century. By Benedetto Croce. Translated from the Italian with an introduction by Douglas Ainslie. Alfred A. Knopf.

The Pleasant Memoirs of the Marquis de Bradomín. Four Sonatas by Ramon del Valle-Inclan. Translated from the Spanish by May Heywood Broun and Thomas Walsh. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

Plays by Molière. Introduction by Waldo Frank. Boni and Liveright.

America of the Fifties. Letters of Fredrika Bremer. Selected and edited by Adolph B. Benson. The American-Scandinavian Foundation.

Germinal: or Master and Man. By Emile Zola. Edited with a preface by Ernest A. Vizetelly. Albert and Charles Boni.

Cats, Dogs and I. Stories from *La Paix chez les Bêtes*. By Colette. Translated by Princess Alexandre Gagarine. Henry Holt and Co.

Five Tales by Emile Verhaeren. Translated by Keene Wallis. With Woodcuts by Frans Masereel. Albert and Charles Boni.

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orwegian Fairy Tales. From the Collection of Asbjörnsen and Moe. Translated by Helen and John Gade. The American-Scandinavian Foundation.

*Notes from France*

TO English and American readers, André Maurois is already well nown. His "Silences du Colonel ramble" are popular in England — I elieve that they are textbooks in the hools. His "Ariel" — the life of helley — has won enthusiastic recogtion from the best Anglo-Saxon crits. A new book of his, which has just peared in the "Cahiers Verts" colction, although it has no special nnection with the English speaking orld, is so well written and so remarkably composed that I have no oubt about its worldwide success.

"Dialogues sur le Commandement" resents three conversations between the Philosopher" and "the Lieunant", on the psychology of the great aders and the art of giving orders and eing a master of other people's ener-es. The style is sober and clear, the lks are based on strong, unprejuced historical information. I believe at it might be of powerful help to nyone who wants to understand the oblems of real leadership in general, nd the motives of some great French storical persons of past and present mes.

Leaving aside masters of men, there e masters of elements and of lonely ourage and perseverance: Alain Gerault, who crossed the Atlantic all by mself in his little "Firecrest", is a mous example of them. His story is ld in a direct, simple, matter-of-fact anner in his book, "Seul à travers Atlantique", which will be of pround inspiration to courageous boys of France and elsewhere. Such a book as this is a refreshing contribution to literature, and is not without influence on the style and direction of more professional writers. Not so remote from it is "Manitoba" by Constantin Weyer, a Frenchman who settled in Canada before the war, abandoned everything in order to join the French army in 1914, behaved brilliantly, and does not like war any more than thousands of others who fought it through. I think that Constantin Weyer is made of the very same stuff as those French pioneers who first discovered the whole hinterland of America, from Louisiana to the polar regions, and whose achievements are too little known by Americans of today.

A book no less virile, but of entirely different inspiration, is "Oncle Anghel" by Panaït Istrati — a continuation of "Kyra Kyralina" which created much sensation last year. The scene is laid in the Balkans, more exactly in Rumania at the time of the Turkish domination — not very long ago. The last story, "Cosma", picturing an indomitable chief of outcasts and his adventures, is really of an epic character. The French have been unanimous in acknowledging the unusual feat accomplished by Panaït Istrati, the young foreigner who has mastered so completely our language.

Both of these books are published by F. Rieder.

To turn from exotic and adventurous stories, we find "Le Colon Gros", a delicate novel by Bernard Barbey (Grasset), and "Les Derniers Plaisirs" by Fernand Fleuret (Nouvelle Revue Française), the latter being a new interpretation of Don Juan in his old days, seeking a prolongation of his magnificent and destructive career in the life of his son. According to Fernand Fleuret's legend, it is the son who re-

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pented and retired into a cloister; the two characters have been mixed into one by an unfaithful tradition. But is not some unfaithfulness exactly what Don Juan deserved?

Paul Reboux, who collaborated with Charles Müller in the popular series of pastiches known as "A la Manière de . . . ", has resumed this type of work with a new series, beginning with a "Léon Daudet" and a "Paul Morand", the first one especially successful. Müller was killed in the war. Reboux continues alone, and may expect much interest on the part of French readers, who are exceedingly fond of that kind of intellectual and humorous "recreation".

PIERRE DE LANUX

### *Lecturers, Mystics, a Book about Kaiser*

GERMAN publishers, full of hope for the speedy resumption of interrupted relations, are making final preparations for the first German book exhibition in America since the war, at the Librarians' Congress in Chicago. They expect it to give a very comprehensive view of the technical progress in bookmaking in the last ten years, of the development of modern German book art, the work of the various hand presses and other fine typography, the individual book as thing of beauty or symptom of taste. But the literary side of the exhibition will probably prove still more interesting to the layman than the merely technical side. Most leading German publishing firms have sent their newest works. Technical and scientific literature of every kind also fills a great place. By the time these lines appear, the exhibition's reign in Chicago will probably be ended, but the initiators hope to b invited to visit other cities.

Ernst Wasmuth, Berlin, best know as architectural publishers, issued la year a portfolio of wonderful phot graphs entitled "Greece" with an i troduction by Hugo von Hofmannstha Now comes an equally lovely volum in similar format, "Deutschland", wit introduction by Gerhart Hauptmann and it appears that a great series c similar books is planned, to be entitle "Orbis Terrarum" (The Countries c the Earth in Pictures). Spain, Greec Germany, and China have alread appeared; Scandinavia, Italy, Nort Africa, England, are soon to fo low. To judge by the latest volume "Germany", the idea — an attemp to create a spiritual landscape of th country through a collection of it most characteristic scenes, monument landscapes, architectural features, i photographs of the highest technica and artistic excellence illumined by short and comprehensive foreword more emotional than coldly descrip tive — may be regarded as successful Each volume is a comfort to the stay at-home traveler and a great source o national satisfaction to the native o the country thus revealed at its best it should also be a splendid preparatio for a visit to that country.

The wife of Hermann Suderman has just died, to the great regret of large circle of friends. It was only a the funeral that many outsiders discov ered that Rolf Lauckner, considered on of the most promising of the younge school of dramatists, was related b marriage to Sudermann, being the so of Mrs. Sudermann by her first hus band.

A last link with a past generation the venerable Hans Thoma, has died after passing his eighty fifth birthday Although his fame is of course base

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pon his work as an artist, yet his riting, full of the same quiet, sunny, omantic thoughtfulness that pervades is pictures, is sufficiently well known nd highly esteemed to win him a lace in the pleasant ranks of the ouble souled painter-authors.

A death which is regarded as a solid oss to Germanic literature is the volun-ary passing of the Austrian author, obert Müller, a novelist of great sty-istic gifts, who for a reason still unex-lained, supposedly in sheer disgust at resent day life as it revealed itself to im, ended his career by a shot through he heart at the early age of thirty ix.

Alexander Eliasberg, perhaps the est known translator from Russian nto German, has died, aged only forty ix, in Berlin. He had lived most of his fe in Munich, but since he was both Russian and a Jew, his literary fame nd his long residence did not prevent ecent expulsion from that sometimes ighly particular city. Eliasberg's nost lasting claim to fame rests on his riginal works, "Literary History of Russia" and "Russian Architecture".

The tenth anniversary of the death f the "heather poet", Hermann Löns, who fell in France, has been celebrated ot only by the erection of a monu-nent, literally on his native heath, of reat unhewn boulders, but also by a umber of articles about him in the ress. Now comes a Herr Deimann vith the interesting news that he has iligently collected Löns articles, tories, poems, and critical writings, nd has enough unpublished material or various new Löns volumes. The riends of this writer of nature and the unt will look forward to their publica-ion.

The clearest, deepest, and most com-rehensive criticism which has yet ap-eared on the endlessly fascinating subject of that dramatic phenomenon Georg Kaiser, is contained in Bern-hard Diebold's book "Der Denkspieler Georg Kaiser" (Georg Kaiser, Jug-gler of Thought), published by the Frankfurter Verlagsanstalt, Frankfurt on the Main. It is valuable because the author regards his subject neither as being under the pitiless scalpel of the mere literary critic nor as swathed in the perfumed clouds of a disciple's homage. Diebold is intensely approv-ing of Kaiser's technique, but he has waited in vain, like all Kaiser's dis-cerning admirers, for a sign that a human heart directs that brilliant head. Diebold's concluding summary is so much to the point that it deserves quotation — especially since it is a judgment upon the man who must be regarded as the most symbolic and sig-nificant as well as most prominent and prolific of modern German dramatic authors:

> Life remains life and art remains art. They are in eternal combat with one an-other and eternally become reconciled. The variety of the relations existing be-tween the two powers provides the variety of the tragic or comic types created by the author: active acceptors of life; epic de-scribers; idealistic thinkers; ironic players.
>
> The activists are the most human; the describers nearest to nature; those preoc-cupied with ideas are the deepest; and the ironists have the lightest weight material and the widest viewpoint; they are the most irresponsible toward the forces of destiny; they are the dancers of the spirit.
>
> All writers belonging to the higher levels combine all these qualities in varied pro-portion; they are at once humanistic, nat-ural, idealistic, and playful.
>
> The spiritual and the material, the ideal and the joyous play of form — these are the four mythical elements of all art.
>
> Glowing in love of humanity, as fire glows; filled with life like the natural earth; guarding wisdom like the depths of still waters; a play of the winds, casting wit and wisdom together in the hurricane — like the ethereal, incomprehensible air.
>
> Georg Kaiser is not the man of fire and earth. Rather is he the Neptune-like keeper of knowledge. But the real gods of his worship are the spirits of the air:

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playful and magical as Ariel; light as a zephyr; and cool and endless, hopelessly infinite like the hypothetical ether.

The ether — which we can only conceive of — which we can neither know nor breathe.

The other pole of reaction from reality to that taken by the Kaiser school in its retreat to thought, is the return or attempted return to mysticism. This is a strong and growing tendency in the writers of the day. There is the older school of true Catholic religious mystics as represented by Isolde Kurz or Leo Weismantel, or the young Catholic cleric Ernst Thrasolt whose latest development is the production of folk ballads of amazingly genuine ring and not at all pious content. There are philosophic Faust-singers, doubting-hopers, such as are revealed in certain phases of Franz Werfel or Josef Winckler — and there is the delightful school of what may be called pagan mystics who seek to incorporate old legends and superstitions of the countryside with the life of everyday and to reinstate old forces of destiny not as hair raising ghosts but more in the old Greek sense as familiars and normal companions by the way.

Two writers of this school, very similar in temperament, are Hans Friedrich Blunck, who has written up as a psychological legendary romance the old story of Berend Fock, the skipper from the shores of the Elbe, the original of the Flying Dutchman, and the Austrian Karl Hans Strobl, who has developed very gradually into this strain, by way of pure fantasy and astrology. Strobl's new volume of short stories "Die Wunderlaube" (The Arbor of Wonders), published by Staackmann, Leipzig, perhaps the ripest, fullest work he has yet done, is filled and flooded with this atmosphere of folk-other-worldliness, the atmosphere not of the fairy but of the folk tale, not of Ariel, but of the trolls. Strobl is a born narrator, his stories read as if he were harper talking to a direct and open mouthed audience; and he has a peculiarly Austrian mixture of humor and tenderness which is most winning and is seldom found in connection with mystical fantasy.

The house in Meersburg where the philosopher Fritz Mauthner spent his last years and died has been acquired by the Academy of Philosophy in Erlangen and is to be used as a summer home for scientists, philosophers, and other men of learning.

Thomas Mann recently read extracts from his new novel "Der Zauberberg." The audience gathered an impression that the dialogues and arguments of which the book largely consists would provide much material for lively controversies.

Jacob Wassermann's new book "Faber, or the Lost Years", opens up another new prospect in his ambitious and Balzacian attempt to depict as a great mural painting the life of his generation. This time he treats the problem of a devotedly attached couple torn asunder by the world war. When the husband at last returns, he is no longer the confident youth who went forth, and his young wife has also ripened into a woman with a mission. Wassermann handles his problem with his accustomed deliberate technique and elaborate beauty of style. A thoughtful, powerful, and significant book which will not disappoint the readers of "The World's Illusion" and "Gold".

Oswald Spengler is at present on a lecture tour in Sweden. He is naturally much besieged by interviewers and has pleased them by laying stress on the great influence of Strindberg on modern German literature.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

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# THE GOSSIP SHOP

CROSS WORD puzzles flourish and amaze and fascinate the world of tters. The first four books on the aker, Taylor monthly best seller list ere recently one variety or another of oss word volumes. We were threatıed with murder the other evening in smoking car by a drunken gentleman ho saw us doing a puzzle; but he nally was persuaded by a cereal salesıan from Oklahoma not to wring our eck with a towel. When last seen, he as finishing the puzzle we had started. rom Atlantic City comes word that ıe hotels are putting pocket dictionaes in the rooms instead of Bibles. hyming dictionaries are coming in gain — our fashion editor has stolen ıe new edition of "Walker's Rhyming )ictionary" from the shelves and in er confession admitted that it was beause she could look up words backard. The child of a friend of ours sked to be taken to the aquarium ecently. This was a surprising inerest, since she had often refused to isit the historical edifice. "I can earn the fishes' names to use in cross ord puzzles", she announced bravely. n the New York Public Library they ave "temporarily withdrawn" the )xford and other huge dictionaries rom the open reference shelves. You ave to go to a special desk and ask or them. A sign sternly says that hey are to be used for reference purıoses only, and "may not be used for olving cross word puzzles". When ve saw this, we slunk out of the Library ike the usual whipped cur. The most rying episode in the puzzle field, howver, was being asked by a beautiful oung lady reporter in St. Louis whether we thought cross word puzzles would benefit humanity. "Woopee!" said we, and vaulted over the railing of the hotel mezzanine and right into the middle of the lobby — much to the annoyance of all concerned. So was very nearly lost to the world one cross word puzzle fan. A good loss, you say? Well, we don't know about that!

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Did you ever submit a contribution to the St. Nicholas League? In the old days, some sixteen years past, Albert Bigelow Paine used to be its judge, and he actually read the hundreds of manuscripts submitted each month, and remembers some of them too. This tall, slender, rosy, white haired friend of Mark Twain has only recently returned from France, where he has been for several years collecting material for a new book. We found him cordial in his estimate of the French race, but vituperative when considering French taxicabs. New York traffic was becoming impossible, he said, but at least one could depend upon it that an American taxi driver had no actual desire for a collision. The wish for a catastrophe is doubtless inbred in the Frenchman. Mr. Paine, recalling Stephen Crane, compared "The Red Badge of Courage" with "What Price Glory?" The latter was written in part by a man who had actually experienced conflict; the other, by one who got most of his data from books and from the accounts of old soldiers; yet both are vivid, real, powerful. There is an interesting reference, by the way, to Stephen Crane in Don Seitz's "Joseph Pulitzer". Mr. Seitz tells of the only report sent by Crane from the



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Spanish War, of its slur on the heroism of New York troops, and the trouble it caused the New York "World".

In a small and homelike house in Savannah literally filled with pets, with her husband, and a daughter who is a miniature edition of herself, lives Marie Conway Oemler. A short, snapping eyed little lady she is, who refuses to be taken seriously and who turned what was intended to be an interview into a morning call breathless with laughter. The author of "Slippy McGee" was busily at work upon "The Wife-in-Law", a title which she informed us had proved too unconventional for England. Mrs. Oemler was born in Savannah, was educated and married there, and has lived there most of her life. She reminded us, curiously perhaps, of Alexander Woollcott, whom we saw recently at a tea. Mr. Woollcott is one of our favorite essayists. We remember with joy his inimitable "Madame Cocotte". We told him we thought he wrote magnificently. "Of course I write magnificently", was his reply, "but I have so little to write about!" The latter part of which is, of course, not true. Mrs. Oemler's wit is of the same sharp, quick variety as that of the famed dramatic critic, yet she is too essentially feminine not to warm it with a kindliness that becomes her well.

Vivian Burnett, son of Frances Hodgson Burnett, and often credited with having inspired her most famous character, Little Lord Fauntleroy, is now engaged in gathering material for a biography of his mother. Mr. Burnett is anxious to get in touch with all of his mother's friends who have letters or material that might be of value in developing the biography. He is living just outside of New York City and letters addressed to Pla dome, Long Island, will reach hi Material sent him will, of course, carefully handled and returned promptly as possible.

From Keith Preston's "Periscope in the Chicago "Daily News" we quo the following:

THE UN-AMERICAN CREDO

(*A synopsis of the American Mercury f November.*)

The Liberty Bell is a fake,
And Captain Kidd was a martyr,
Moonshine is wholesome to take,
Chancellor Day was a tartar.

The Star-Spangled Banner's a frost,
Critics are nitwits save one;
The art of news-writing is lost;
All the stars set with the Sun.

Bootleg is bully to drink;
The south is a haven of hookworms;
Women were not made to think;
Dumb belles are better than bookworm

This must of evil suffice
For the month, but remember,
There'll be more of the same at a price
On the first of December.

After reading this November Mercur with its typically American muddle topics and its quite un-American point view we tried to think what it was like, an at last it came to us. It's the Literar Digest with acute indigestion, a prolonge bellyache from cover to cover.

This seems to us unkind. Whateve the attitude of this bright green maga zine, and it is one with which we con stantly quarrel, there seems to be n gainsaying the fact that it is brilliantl edited and practically always readable When it is found on the table of conservative banker, it must be proo of one of two things: either it tran scends its policies, or the banker doesn' read it. We suspect the former.

"Old English Sporting Books" is on of those luxurious, large, scarlet bound volumes which the presses of Merri

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*From "Iron Men and Wooden Ships"*

ngland fortunately give us every now nd then to decorate our library tables. t is by Ralph Nevill and is published y the Studio, Limited. It includes a ibliography of first and rare editions f some of the principal sporting books, nd illustrations which are magnificent o behold. Paintings, drawings, enravings, from Plate I — the title page o Walton's "Compleat Angler" — to late CVII — "The 'Benicia Boy' Asonishes Miss Birche's Establishment" Phiz) — reveal indescribable delights. here are nice prizefights observed y stiff gentlemen in tight trousers. here are lean, long race horses and apper hunters with red coated riders. here is a fascinating print of a bear aiting. There is one masterpiece itled, "How to Ride Gentle and Agreeble Down Hill". A book that is ulky, beautiful, and full of picturesque oys. Likewise "Iron Men and Woodn Ships", from our own Garden City ress, is a fine example of bookmaking nd printing. It is a collection of deep ea chanties edited by Frank Shay, vith decorations and woodcuts by E. A. Wilson and an introduction by William McFee. What with Arthur Mason starting his Chantey Club where sailors may gather to sing and alk, things are getting salty enough in his old town. We have at last discovered a deep sea ancestor ourself in the person of a romantic Dutch great-great-grandfather — a sea captain and rover! Ship ahoy, granddad! All in all, this volume is one of the most beautiful we have seen in years. The woodblocks will remind you of Lovat Fraser's; but they have even more gusto! "Home for Christmas" with its flat yellows, blues, and reds is a masterpiece. Nor must the text be neglected. "Sally Brown" is not a Sunday School piece but it has an air, hasn't it, granddad?

Oh, Sally Brown of New York City,
Way-ay, roll and go!
Oh, Sally Brown you're very pretty,
And I'll spend my money on Sally Brown.

Oh, Sally Brown's a bright mulatter,
Way-ay, roll and go!
She drinks rum and chews tobaccer,
And I'll spend my money on Sally Brown.

Oh, Sally Brown's a Creole lady,
Way-ay, roll and go!
She's the mother of a yeller baby,
And I'll spend my money on Sally Brown.

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There seems to be some confusion in the minds of competitors for our club paper prize contest. The subjects of the essays were purposely indefinite, so that a variety of papers could be submitted. Papers need not have been read before a club, nor do they have to be approved by the club or its secretary. They have simply to be signed by the secretary of a club in order to show that the contestant is a member of some club, any club, a club at any rate. The editors of THE BOOKMAN will be glad to answer any questions in regard to this contest, the particulars of which we reprint:

THE BOOKMAN offers prizes for papers on the following subjects:

1. A Literary Subject
2. National Affairs (domestic)
3. Education
4. Decorative Art or Business Ideals
5. Religion or Social Welfare or Club Work

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A first prize of two hundred dollars will be awarded for the best essay submitted. In addition, one hundred dollars will be paid for the best essay in each of the five classes.

Conditions for entrance are as follows:

All members of men's or women's clubs in the United States may enter this contest.

It is not necessary that the paper submitted shall have been read before the club. Approval by the club president or secretary is all that is necessary.

Manuscripts should not be under 2,000 or more than 3,000 words in length and must be typed clearly on one side of the sheet.

They should be addressed to: Club Contest Editor, THE BOOKMAN, 244 Madison Avenue, New York City, on or before April 1, 1925.

All essays awarded prizes will be printed in THE BOOKMAN at the discretion of the editor.

Copies of rejected papers will not be returned, but after the announcement of prize winners, other contestants have full publication rights of their papers.

Announcement of the judges' decision will be made in the June issue of THE BOOKMAN, published May 22, 1925.

The judges in this contest will be: Mary Roberts Rinehart, chairman; Ida Clyde Clarke, Fannie Hurst, John Erskine, and John Farrar.

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Occasionally an editor finds himself puzzled by his contributors. Such a puzzlement arises from two considerations of the much discussed Steuart Life of Stevenson. Mr. Hellman in his article in the Christmas number praised it. The Londoner in his causerie this month finds it anything but praiseworthy. About this book there have been varying opinions from all the leading critics. We have presented two viewpoints. We should like to know what you think. Our own opinion we reserve out of respect for both of the very worthy gentlemen, each of whom is an authority on the subject of Stevenson.

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North, south, east, and west we have been this month, and many the new friends met and new scenes encountered. We shall not soon forget Dr. Bostwick's kindliness, or t glories of the St. Louis public librar He tells us, by the way, that when th structure needs to be enlarged, whi is soon, they are thinking of buildi an addition some miles out, where se dom used books can be stored. The can be secured quickly by truck servi and so it will be unnecessary to spc the symmetry of Cass Gilbert's beaut ful building or purchase more cost land in the heart of the town. Fro the National Council of Teachers English we learned much of new teacl ing methods. In Cincinnati we hear a fine concert by the local orchestra an saw Charles P. Taft's astonishing pr vate collection of paintings and porc lains — Rembrandts, Turners, Corot etc., etc. Our favorite proved to b the wistful Sargent "R. L. S.", with it skin the texture of death-in-life. I Cleveland, we listened to Dougl Moore playing César Franck on th organ of the Art Museum, and talke with Charles S. Brooks about the littl theatre there, which not only pays fo itself, giving a performance practicall every night, but makes some thousand a year. One of its most successful rep ertory plays is "March Hares". Mr Brooks's own drama "Luca Sarto has been given two different season now and will probably be repeated The ladies of Goucher College in Balti more seem much interested in H. L Mencken, a local hero of whom yo may have heard. We have yet to dis cuss with Mr. Mencken his interest i the ladies of Goucher College. W telephoned his home and a voice re sponded: "Oh, you want to speak with Harry!" "Harry's" tones sounded as jovial as ever as he chided us fo neglecting to call. In the south — Savannah and Charleston — we, Yan kee that we are, left our foolish heart Of this section we shall write again —

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of the unusual things they are doing in poetry and prose, of the active interest they are taking in developing their own literature, of magical avenues, of two hundred and fifty year old oaks, of Fort Sumter, lying in the mists of Charleston Harbor, of sunlight on broken façade and pillared plantation. A magic country where camellias bloom in the dooryard and ladies are unbelievably charming. This south is pernicious, too, for it demands revisiting. What with spring coming and wisteria blooming, it is going to take many wild horses to keep us away from those enchanting scenes and those charming people. In Savannah is the Little House, white and misty behind gateways and a flagged walk. Here are antiques, books, gifts, tea — everything for sale. Two of its proprietors, Elfrida De Renne Barrow and Laura Palmer Bell, presented us with a book of theirs, "Anchored Yesterdays", a log book of Savannah. They have used an original method in detailing the absorbing history of old Savannah. Any day from their log proves interesting. They were able to gather much new material from Mrs. Barrow's father's library (her settler ancestor was a friend of Governor Oglethorpe's) and from early newspapers and documents. Take 1796 — October 21:

Announcement is made in the Columbian Museum that "*the New Theatre in Savannah*" will be opened with the "favorite comedy, 'The Contrast'".

An advertisement in the Columbian Museum shows the existence of a "*School for Dancing, . . . Mr. Goodwin . . . is fitting up a commodious room for the reception of those young misses and masters whose respective parents may honor him with their patronage.*" Among the dances taught by Mr. Goodwin is "*The new Mode in Dancing the Minuet, (with the graceful baulk in offering hands).*" The terms are stated as follows: "*Four Dollars at Entrance, and Six Dollars per Quarter, payable monthly — which Mr. Goodwin will receive in Domestic articles, or orders for such.*"

At a recent dinner of the P. E. N. Club we again met Fannie Hurst, who told us that she lately tried the experiment of writing mornings on a novel and afternoons on short stories, without success. She had always really

*Arthur Train*

known, she assured us, that it was impossible to do two pieces of creative writing at the same time; now she is convinced. Nathalia Crane's mother telephones us that her daughter's book of poems has been accepted for publication in England. John Bennett, the author of "Master Skylark", is at work on a pioneer novel, to be the story of his father's life in the south and west. His wife recently offered us some sweet potato pone — a dish devoutly to be recommended. The Famous Players have adopted a new method with authors: namely, capturing them and setting them the task of "observing". Arthur Train, for example, has been hard at work trying to turn out an original story under studio guidance — also Frances Noyes Hart. Well, an author may learn much in a motion picture studio, we doubt not. At a luncheon recently we met Charles Downer Hazen. We

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found him as delightful as his book which we studied valiantly while in college — "Europe Since 1815" was the one current in our day. He says he has a subconscious fear that people who have studied his books will picture him in person as a walking textbook. Surely anyone foolish enough to think of calling his histories textbooks should not worry this sturdy, gay, transplanted Vermonter.

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Gene Stratton-Porter's death in an automobile accident was a shock to a host of readers all over the world. Mrs. Stratton-Porter combined in unusual fashion a knowledge and accurate love of nature with a fanciful idea of the ways of life. This combination led her to renown; her "Freckles" will be read for many years to come. She would have liked best to be remembered as a poet, and her poetry was not without quality; but it did not justify her great belief in it, as did the popularity of her books. She believed in the purity of life as so many of us would like to believe. Her influence, therefore, was an uplifting one. There are those who claim that it is harmful to cover the realities of life in a veil of sweetness. Of that, we are not so sure. Disillusion the whole world, and why not pray for the deluge? We must have our Girls of the Limberlost as well as our Sister Carries. Both are inevitable — and the loss of either is a real loss to the reading public.

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Our fashion editor, in her feminine way, still attends poetry teas. She reports as follows:

As a rule we are shy of poetry teas, but one cold Sunday afternoon in December, after we had addressed hundreds of Christmas cards, we took our roommate H. F., whose sonnets are to be found in F. P. A.'s Conning Tower every other week it seems, by the hand and journeyed down to Irving Place to hear Joseph Auslander read some unpublished poems in Mr. Leighton Rollins's rooms at the top of a gorgeous old house with spooky staircases, escutcheons on the walls, candle light and fireplaces, and a cowbell to announce you. When we had removed several fur coats, we found ourself confronted by an old Columbia friend Henry Morton Robinson, who is now teaching English in that institution and is the author of "Children of Morningside" We were then led around and introduced to lovely ladies and interesting looking men and were served tea from an ancient silver tea service, not to mention being fed banana sandwiches by Mr. Rollins's charming aunt Still practically frozen, we seized H. F again and sat down right in front of the burning logs to toast our feet and listen while Mr. Robinson read "Lillian". H. F breathed "Refreshingly classical", and we agreed. Harold Vinal sat under the lamp and read several fearsome things about New England farmers. Gustav Davidson, who had been talking to a beautiful, slender lady in a corner, emerged long enough to read some love poems which made us sit up and take notice. And presently the gentleman whom we had come to hear made a dramatic entrance. He was, however, so shattered from having quite accidentally hit his companion on the forehead with an ax (the injured gentleman looked most cheerful in spite of a plaster across one eye), that he couldn't bear to think of poetry but instead fell under the spell of a dark eyed girl who was reputed to have played in "Cyrano de Bergerac". H. F. says she was wearing smoked amber earrings, and promptly lusted for a pair. Isabel Fiske Conant was discovered to be sitting in the background, as was Leslie Nelson Jennings. All this time we were admiring Mr. Rollins's showmanship and the ease with which he played host to such distinguished guests.

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On the top floor of a hotel in Savannah, Harry Hervey, the young novelist, has his studio, hung deeply with oriental rugs and trappings, with the scent of incense in the air and the manuscript of his new novel neatly piled alongside a prosaic typewriter. Mr. Hervey is only twenty four, but he has written three books and is about to start on another trip to far flung ports of the East. His first novel was praised by H. L. Mencken and others. His latest travel book, "Where Strange Gods Call", is glamorous indeed! It is filled

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vith golden words and good material. Hervey is a dark young man who wears n his hand a ruby ring presented to im by a beneficent oriental potentate. He showed us a white robe embroidred with a golden peacock and lined vith saffron, that should be worn by a Pola Negri. We forgot to ask him if ie ever wears it himself. The lure of he Orient is strong in Mr. Hervey. If ie isn't careful it may obliterate his eally fine sense of how Anglo-Saxon prose should be written.

William C. Lengel, editorial repreentative of the International Magaine Company, publishers of "Cosmoolitan", "Hearst's International", 'Good Housekeeping", and "Harper's Bazar", sailed January third for Engand to take up his residence in Lonlon. Mr. Lengel will act as European editorial representative for both the nternational Magazine Company and Cosmopolitan Book Corporation and arrange for American publication of he books of noteworthy present day vriters abroad. This new work in a arger field comes as a natural consequence of Mr. Lengel's successful ictivities among well known authors of his country. All luck to you, Will, ay we. Along about the same time ailed a young gentleman from Yale named Carter, who writes us now from Tunis that it is a good place in which o evolve a novel. Sailed, too, an emryo young publisher bent on studying it the Sorbonne and elsewhere in Paris. He writes that Pierre de Lanux is giving in interesting series of lectures and hat he has seen Gloria Swanson drinking Russian tea. Just before she sailed on a three year honeymoon, we heard Dorothy Speare sing (alone and in a duet rom "Thaïs" with her husband, Mr. Christmas, if you please). Her voice s limpid, lyric, and impassioned as well. She will sing several operas in Italy this winter and continue her studies. Just before she left she de-

posited the manuscript of her new novel. It has many recognizable figures of New York literary-social life in it, we understand. We asked Gropper to do a sketch to illustrate this piece, and his only answer was a sketch of himself after he'd tried to do it — so there you are!

The society columns of the Cincinnati "Enquirer" furnish us often with examples of highly spiced prose. We are still hoping some day to meet the lady who writes it. We have always wanted to hear a "scintillating voice" — and she, alas, has heard one first.

So to amalgamate the joyous sense of fellowship of the carolers, precariously perched upon these sturdy railings; with consistent training in music and a careful selection of programs, for these college minstrels now consolidated into a carefully-taught body of fresh scintillating voices, in which something indescribable, but very

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telling, and which may be summed up as the essence of life on the campus, is plainly visible and very inspiring.

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Other bookish persons may go in for first editions, first novels, cookbooks, what not; but when Your Gossip's effects are made public the æsthetes will indeed raise wondering eyebrows. For our humble passion is directed toward those mundane tomes known as reference books. Since 1921 we have cherished on our desk "The Bookman's Manual" compiled by Bessie Graham, the Lady from Philadelphia (literally and otherwise) to those who would learn how bookselling may become an art. Let the uninitiated question us as to the relative values of various encyclopædias, or demand to know who published Lecky's "History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe". A moment's consultation with Miss Graham and we are ready with an answer. This winter along comes a new, revised edition of the "Manual", almost twice the size of the original. Automatically, we now consider ourself twice as well informed. We have also pounced upon "The New Champlin Cyclopedia for Young Folks: Persons", edited by Lincoln MacVeagh. Translated, the title means that the old volume on "Persons and Places" will give way to two, each enlarged and brought up to date. True, we scarcely belong to the "young folks" category; yet we have profited by an excursion into the volume, and have found entertainment in the numerous pictures. Which reminds us that there are fascinating photographs of pubs and other places mentioned by Dickens in Arthur L. Hayward's new "Dickens Encyclopædia", described as "an alphabetical dictionary of references to every character and place mentioned in the works of fiction, with explanatory notes on obscure allusions and phrases". What is more, you will find tucked way in the back a collection of "Wellerisms", and a group of Sairey Gamp's pronouncements, with references to the pages on which they occur. But we must make an end of chatter: "Business first, pleasure arterwards, as King Richard the Third said wen he stabbed the t'other king in the Tower, afore he smothered the babbies."

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From Otterville, Missouri, Catherine Cranmer sends her list of

THE TEN BOOKS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED ME MOST

First read

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|---|---|
| at 13 | *Little Women.* (My first glimpse of ideal family relationships.) |
| 16 | *Dombey and Son.* (A whole world of new people.) |
| 17 | *Alone*, by Marion Harland. (Its heroine had a temper like my own but managed it better.) |
| 16–18 | *The Three Musketeers.* (Thrills!) |
| 20–25 | *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table.* (My first inkling that conversation could be about ideas instead of about the weather, the neighbors, crops, and poultry.) |
| 30 | *How to Live on 24 Hours a Day.* (I had become a wage earner by this time.) |
| 30 | *Woman and Labor.* (And by this time a feminist.) |
| 30 | *Hamlet.* (At 2 a.m. after having seen Sothern and Marlowe in it.) |
| 40 | *An Apology for Old Maids.* (By this time I had become — 3 letter adj., 4 letter noun *not* meaning "young miss".) |
| 40 | Palgrave's *Golden Treasury.* (Made a glorious summer in the Rocky Mountains still more glorious.) |

"And while making up this list", adds the compiler, "I've resolved to reread them all this winter to see what they'll give me now." A splendid idea.

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